

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL'S REPORT 2025

96th CONFERENCE
20 – 23 MAY 2025



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EXECUTIVE COUNCIL'S REPORT

TO THE

96th CONFERENCE

2025

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PRESIDENT'S INTRODUCTION

The year 2024 will go down as a turning point in the history of this country and our union. For 14 years, we've suffered under successive Tory-led governments, under five different prime ministers, who all made a complete mess at Westminster.

FBU members should never forget the austerity imposed by Cameron and his friends in 2010. It has cost us a fifth of the workforce – completely unjustified given the risks our members face. Nobody should forget it was Cameron's government that attacked our pensions, forcing us to pay more, work longer and get less. The union is still fighting to protect members' pensions from these attacks.

Nobody should forget that Cameron's government imposed a two-year pay freeze, so fire employers made no pay offer at all. They then imposed a pay cap on every public sector worker – more than five million people – of 1% between 2012 and 2017. That meant firefighters' pay was below inflation, year after year.

Let nobody forget the Tories tried to privatise the fire and rescue service. We had to fight off their efforts to force it through a Westminster committee. We had to campaign in Cleveland against mutualisation, which was privatisation by the back door. We faced down AssetCo, which owned London's fire appliances, but went bankrupt. They were quickly replaced by Babcock for the supply of appliances and they also took over London's training, as they have done elsewhere. They tried to sell off the London control room. Ministers sold off the Fire Service College – with the support of CFOA.

Ministers came back with more madcap schemes. They transferred fire to the Home Office and tried to impose the policing model on our profession. May, Johnson, Truss and Sunak allowed police and crime commissioners to take over fire authorities, even when most local people and our members opposed it. Their White Paper included silly ideas like "operational independence", giving chief officers a free hand. Ministers spent public money making the NFCC, a private company with a few hundred principal managers, richer than the FBU.

Through all this, the FBU stood strong. Our members stood up to this onslaught. How much worse would the fire and rescue service have been wrecked were it not for the campaigning activities of FBU members and officials?

Last year, the Tory government was swept away. A Labour government was elected with a mandate for change. They promised to deliver for public services, including fire and rescue. They promised to deliver for trade unions and for working people as a whole.

So far there have been some signs of progress, which the FBU has welcomed. Ministers are consulting with the FBU, listening to our members' issues and looking for solutions. They need to put sustainable investment into the fire and rescue service, so our industry can meet the challenges ahead. That also means better pay and conditions, safety and equality for the professionals that do the work. The FBU will continue to challenge politicians to deliver these for our members.

This year, the FBU has to turn outwards and face the new situation. Globally, the rise of the far right cannot be ignored. It can't be ignored on our own doorstep – with Farage's Reform and even worse on the streets. The union has to engage with governments in all four administrations. We have to renew our own democratic structures and ready the union for mobilisation. The FBU can be proud of our past achievements. We need to be ready for what lies ahead.

SECTION A

PAY AND CONDITIONS

A1 INTRODUCTION

During 2024, the FBU continued to campaign on firefighters' pay and conditions. The FBU negotiated a pay settlement, which included an increase of 4% on all NJC rates of pay, continuous professional development (CPD), an increase to 15% of the basic pay for retained firefighters, and an increase in maternity pay to 26 weeks' full pay and 13 weeks of statutory maternity pay. Inflation measured by the consumer prices index (CPI) was 2% when the settlement was implemented.

The FBU works through the collective bargaining structures within the fire and rescue sector. The FBU negotiates on firefighters' pay and conditions through the National Joint Council (NJC) and the Middle Managers Negotiating Body (MMNB). During the year, Professor Lynette Harris from Nottingham Trent University chaired the NJC and MMNB. The union supports UK-wide pay and conditions bargaining and the 'Grey Book' as the best means to achieve improvements for all firefighters, regardless of role or duty system.

NJC business is also recorded in other parts of the annual report. This includes marauding terrorist attacks (MTA) in Section D, the Inclusive Fire Service Group (IFSG) in Section H and ballots in Section K.

A2 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NJC INDEPENDENT CHAIR 2023-24

Background

The National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services (NJC), including the Middle Managers Negotiating Body (MMNB), is the body responsible for the supervision, from a national point of view, of all questions affecting the conditions of service of employees (other than those in Brigade Management roles) of fire and rescue services established under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (for England and Wales), Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Fire and Rescue Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006.

The NJC handles issues that affect all employees from firefighter to area manager. The MMNB has plenary powers to deal with issues which affect employees solely in the roles of station manager to area manager.

The principal purpose is to reach agreement on a national framework of pay and conditions for local application throughout the fire and rescue service in the United Kingdom. The NJC and MMNB are committed to the local democratic control of fire and rescue services to the community.

The parties to the negotiation are the Employers' Side comprising representatives of the Local Government Association, Welsh Local Government Association, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Board and the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service Board. The Employees' Side comprises representatives of the Fire Brigades Union and, for the MMNB, the Fire Brigades Union and the Fire Officers Association.

An Independent Chair oversees the work of the National Joint Council and the Middle Managers Negotiating Body and is supported by two Vice-Chairs. Vice-Chair appointments alternate between the Sides on an annual basis.

For this year Cllr Nick Chard served as Vice Chair of the NJC and Ian Murray as Vice Chair of the Middle Managers Negotiating Body.

The Independent Chair works closely with the Joint Secretariat, which is currently provided by the Local Government Association and the Fire Brigades Union.

The membership of the National Joint Council and the Middle Managers Negotiating Body during 2023-24 is attached to this report.

Introduction

- 1. This Annual Report covers the period from 1 October 2023 to 30 September 2024. It has undoubtedly been another busy year for the members and Joint Secretaries of the LAFRS NJC, perhaps predictably as the agreements reached in 2023 dealt not just with pay, but with commitments to explore additional issues in detail, in advance of the 2024 pay round. This commitment included the establishment of two joint working groups, as well as the delegation of additional topics to be progressed via the Joint Secretaries with the support of both sides of the NJC. This work has been time consuming and clearly difficult at times but did result in another agreement in 2024, which is a mark of success for all involved and details in relation to that work are contained within this Annual Report, alongside all the main issues of the year.*

What do we do?

- 2. The National Joint Council provides:*
 - The national negotiating machinery for the pay and conditions of service of uniformed fire service employees in the United Kingdom.*
 - The services of the respective side Secretariats in assisting parties at local level to resolve areas of disagreement.*
 - The services of the respective side Secretariats in assisting parties at local level in the interpretation of the national scheme of conditions of employment and the flexibilities contained therein.*

Meeting dates in 2023 – 2024

- 3. The National Joint Council met on three occasions: Thursday 5 October 2023; Tuesday 27 February 2024 and Tuesday 4 June 2024. A number of issues were considered and reports from the Independent Chair were approved. The Treasurer's Report for the year to 31 March 2024 is due for presentation and approval at the NJC was approved at the meeting on 22 October 2024.*

Key issues under consideration during 2023 – 2024

4. Key issues under consideration by the National Joint Council and, as appropriate, the Middle Managers Negotiating Body, on which there were written and oral reports from the Joint Secretaries, included:

Pay

5. Pay negotiations in 2023 had been difficult and it was a testament to the NJC that an agreement was finally reached in the spring which settled pay and stepped the service back from industrial dispute – which at that stage had started to feel inevitable. The 2023 agreement committed the NJC to establish joint working groups to tackle the additional items of Pay and Reward for Retained Duty System Firefighters, the question of pay progression, and the question of the pay differential for Firefighters and Firefighters (Control), discussions around the Continuous Professional Development (CPD) agreement and the broader question of new roles. Following 8 months of joint working, agreement was reached which delivered on the commitment to discuss all these issues in detail, made progress on some key items, established shared aspiration on others, and fulfilled obligations to explore all these issues – even where there wasn't in the end agreement to make specific of identified change at this stage. In May, the National Employers were able to make the following offer, which later formed the basis of agreement with the employees' side:
6. A 4.0 per cent increase on all basic pay rates and Continual Professional Development payments with effect from 1 July 2024

Retained Duty System firefighters

7. The 2023 agreement stated "firefighters employed on the retained duty system are an important part of the workforce. It is proposed that both parties commit to a joint working group to include review of the retained duty system pay and rewards package. Membership of the group and a schedule of dates should be agreed as soon as possible once the current pay award negotiations are concluded with the intention of the joint working group concluding its work within 8 months."
8. As part of the 2024 pay agreement, the NJC agreed to restructure the RDS retainer fee, introducing bands for commitment at less than 120 hours, and increasing the retainer fee at full cover (120 hours) from 10% to 15% per annum and providing additional bands at 10%, 7.5% and 5% for less than full cover.
9. Noting the financial implications for services in relation to this part of the agreement, it was agreed to delay the change until 1 January 2025.

Pay progression

10. The 2023 agreement stated "the employers' side of the NJC is content to continue discussions around pay structure and progression. It is proposed that both parties commit to a joint working party commencing as soon as possible once the current pay award negotiations are concluded with the intention of the joint working party concluding its work within 8 months."
11. The joint working party did produce their joint report which included the following paragraph: "While there remains a lot to be said for the existing pay structure as set out in the Grey Book, it provides for clarity and rationale of rate for the job and provides for a structure that sits well in relation to equal pay. However, the group discussions explored potential areas of improvement and development of the existing pay and reward structure, linking closely to skill and role development."
12. Following consultation with the sector, the national employers felt this needed further thought and consideration and that both sides would need additional discussion in order to take this work forward. That said, there was a shared objective to seek to establish a reformed national pay and grading structure to underline firefighting as a highly skilled and professional occupation, rewarding skills and knowledge (not simply time served in role) and driving professionalised leadership at all levels.
13. The offer letter to the employee side contained the following important paragraph which encapsulates where this issue is now: "The joint working party raised questions about the role of the existing CPD agreement, a view which a significant number of FRAs/FRS indicated they shared, when asked by the national employers as part of our consultation. Inevitably this work is complex and requires further detailed consideration and agreement. Having established these high-level principles between us, the national employers commit to further talks, which should include an allowance of time to raise again

the question of additional external funding into the sector (with all governments across our four nations) to support our shared ambition, and with a view to doing further work (in relation to a skills/knowledge framework) for consideration in time for the next annual pay review date: July 2025."

New roles

14. *Clearly both sides of the NJC remain committed and open to developing the work of the fire and rescue service and this subject has underpinned a lot of the discussion within the pay structure deliberations to date.*

Occupational Maternity Pay

15. *Following a claim from the Employee side of the NJC, agreement was reached to extend occupational maternity pay as set out in the national conditions of service (Grey Book) to 26 weeks at full pay, for staff with qualifying service.*

Inclusive Fire Service Group

16. *The Inclusive Fire Service Group has met throughout 2023/2024 bringing together the NJC representatives of National Employers and Trade Unions along with the NFCC. The original Improvement Strategies were reviewed and reissued, and the group is now working at how to support services in bringing them to life locally, following the national industrial relations approach on this issue, which is to seek consensus and joint working wherever possible. The IFSG have also produced a poster to capture their purpose and underline the commitment all signatory organisations share in relation to working in the sector.*

General Joint Secretariat Activity

17. *Issues under negotiation within the NJC are in the main progressed through the Joint Secretariat acting within the remit of its respective Sides.*
18. *On occasion lead members from each Side of the NJC/MMNB may meet outside of the usual round of larger meetings.*
19. *The Joint Secretariat usually formally meets every four to six weeks to exchange information and to progress negotiations. These meetings are also an opportunity for either side to identify potential local industrial relations flashpoints and subsequently to raise those concerns with the local management or union side as appropriate.*
20. *The Joint Secretariat leads discussion in National Joint Council working parties which informs negotiations and respective Side positions, as appropriate.*
21. *The Joint Secretariat also leads discussion in the sub-Committee on changes to rolemaps and national occupational standards.*
22. *When jointly requested to do so, the Joint Secretariat also works with parties at local level who wish to explore their current industrial relations relationship with a view to seeking improvement. This involves a full day session working with key local management and union representatives.*
23. *The Joint Secretariat has handled a considerable number of requests from local parties seeking interpretation or clarification of Scheme of Conditions of Service issues or early informal assistance where a matter is likely to prove difficult to resolve at local level.*
24. *In addition to the above, the Joint Secretariat has a formal conciliation role when requested by both parties at local level to assist in resolution of local disagreements.*

Joint Secretariat – Local Conciliation

25. *In circumstances where discussion has been exhausted without agreement on an issue, or issues, at local level the Joint Secretariat when requested by both parties to do so can provide a confidential conciliation process in order to assist the parties in identifying a mutually agreeable outcome.*
26. *The Joint Secretariat has a very good record of assisting the parties to either reach agreement at the time of conciliation or to develop the basis of an agreement which leads to a resolution following further discussion shortly afterwards at local level.*

Resolution Advisory Panel

27. *The Scheme of Conditions of Service Negotiation Procedure contains a number of options that local parties can explore to facilitate resolution to local issues where negotiation at local level has been exhausted. One of those options is the NJC's Resolution Advisory Panel whose remit is to endeavour to facilitate an agreement between the parties but where that is not possible the Independent Chair will make a recommendation based upon the positions presented and discussed during the course of the meeting and which they believe can form the basis of an agreement. During this last year a new Independent Chair was appointed to the role, Mr Stephen Penford.*

Technical Advisory Panel

28. *The NJC also operates a Technical Advisory Panel which can consider whether or not a new duty system proposed at local level reflects the principles contained in Section 4 of the Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book) where it has not been possible to reach an agreement on its introduction. As with RAP, Stephen Penford was appointed to the role of Independent Chair during this year.*

29. *As with RAP, the Technical Advisory Panel endeavours to facilitate an agreement between the parties, but where that is not possible the Independent Chair can, in addition to commenting on the extent of compliance with the principles, recommend a proposal that they believe may form the basis of an agreement.*

30. *The NJC's Technical Advisory Panel, which is comprised of an Independent Chair and the Joint Secretaries, did not receive any requests for assistance during 2023/24 and therefore did not meet.*

Circulars

Six circulars have been issued since the last report of the Independent Chair:

- *NJC/6/23 – NJC workforce survey*
- *NJC/1/24 – Appointment of Independent Chair of the Resolution & Technical Advisory Panels*
- *NJC/2/24 – Inclusive Fire Service Group – Revised Improvement Strategies*
- *NJC/3/24 – Pay Award 2024*
- *NJC/4/24 – Continual professional development payments 2024*
- *NJC/5/24 – Maternity Pay*

Conclusion

31. *There are several aspects to the role of Independent Chair. In the past year it has involved:*

- *Chairing of NJC and MMNB meetings.*
- *Consideration, with the Joint Secretaries, of items due for discussion through the NJC and/or MMNB at those meetings.*
- *Ensuring the NJC and MMNB are each aware of the work of the other and that an opportunity for comment is provided.*
- *Raising issues relating to how the formal business of NJC/MMNB meetings is handled with Joint Secretaries as appropriate.*
- *Provision of this annual report.*

32. *In 2023 the context for the pay negotiations were particularly challenging but, due to the efforts of the NJC, a collectively bargained settlement was achieved. This year a pay award was agreed well in advance of the 1 July 2024 pay award date and it is encouraging to note that the joint working groups agreed in the areas detailed in para 5 of this report have made sound progress over the past 12 months.*

33. *After an interregnum, in part due to Covid-19, the IFSG began to meet again in the summer of 2023 and has continued to do so during the year. A defining characteristic and benefit of the IFSG is the breadth of its membership. This is intended to provide a wide range of contributions and perspectives which is a benefit but can also present difficulties as there is a dependence on a full representation of its membership to move things forward. Based on my experience of chairing the IFSG over the past year, there are number of issues for consideration if the IFSG is going to be able to make a contribution at a time when strengthening inclusivity in the fire and rescue service is critical. These are a clarification of its terms of reference, how it is to be resourced and the need for the larger group to devolve work to smaller groups to progress matters.*

34. *As highlighted in previous annual reports, it is recognised that a great deal of unseen work is undertaken by the joint secretariat, members of joint working groups and other colleagues and my thanks to everyone involved for their efforts and contributions during past twelve months.*

35. *This is my last report as your Independent Chair, and it has been a real privilege to undertake this role over the past six years. These years have not always been easy ones with the unprecedented challenge of the Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent inflationary pressures on earnings. The NJC has clearly demonstrated its worth during this period with, for example, the commendable Tripartite agreement which provided the framework for the Service's Covid-19 response and in successfully agreeing a pay settlement in 2023 when industrial action was prevalent in other public services. Lastly, I should like to take this opportunity to wish the NJC well in its future endeavours.*

Professor Lynette Harris, Independent Chair

A3 PAY RATES AND CPD PAYMENTS 2024-25

New pay rates were published in the FBU's all members circular (2024HOC0218MW) and are included in this report for the record (circular NJC/3/24).

FIREFIGHTING ROLES – PAY RATES FROM 1 JULY 2024

	Basic annual £	Basic hourly rate £	Overtime rate £
Firefighter			
Trainee	28,265	12.91	19.37
Development	29,442	13.44	20.16
Competent	37,675	17.20	25.80
Crew Manager			
Development	40,041	18.28	27.42
Competent	41,767	19.07	28.61
Watch Manager			
Development	42,672	19.48	29.22
Competent A	43,857	20.03	30.05
Competent B	46,707	21.33	32.00
Station Manager			
Development	48,580	22.18	33.27
Competent A	50,041	22.85	34.28
Competent B	53,586	24.47	36.71
Group Manager			
Development	55,953	25.55	Not applicable
Competent A	57,632	26.32	Not applicable
Competent B	62,028	28.32	Not applicable
Area Manager			
Development	65,690	30.00	Not applicable
Competent A	67,658	30.89	Not applicable
Competent B	72,054	32.90	Not applicable

FIREFIGHTING ROLES – PAY RATES FROM 1 JULY 2024 (RETAINED DUTY SYSTEM)

	(1) £ per annum	(2) £ per annum	(3) £ per hour	(4) £ per occasion
Firefighter				
Trainee	2,827	1,413	12.91	4.96
Development	2,944	1,472	13.44	4.96
Competent	3,768	1,884	17.20	4.96
Crew Manager				
Development	4,004	2,002	18.28	4.96
Competent	4,177	2,088	19.07	4.96
Watch Manager				
Development	4,267	2,134	19.48	4.96
Competent A	4,386	2,193	20.03	4.96
Competent B	4,671	2,335	21.33	4.96
Station Manager				
Development	4,858	2,429	22.18	4.96
Competent A	5,004	2,502	22.85	4.96
Competent B	5,359	2,679	24.47	4.96
Group Manager				
Development	5,595	2,798	25.55	4.96
Competent A	5,763	2,882	26.32	4.96
Competent B	6,203	3,101	28.32	4.96
Area Manager				
Development	6,569	3,285	30.00	4.96
Competent A	6,766	3,383	30.89	4.96
Competent B	7,205	3,603	32.90	4.96

Column 1 shows the full annual retainer (10% of the full-time basic annual salary).

Column 2 shows the retainer for employees on the day crewing duty system (5% of the full-time basic annual salary).

Column 3 shows the hourly rate for work undertaken.

Column 4 shows the disturbance payment per call-out.

From 1 January 2025, firefighters working the Retained Duty System received a substantial increase in pay and greater flexibility (2025HOC0001MW):

The annual retainer for an employee providing full cover (which is defined as cover of at least 120 hours per week) is 15% of the appropriate annual basic pay.

Where an employee provides cover for less than 120 hours per week the following bands may be applied:

Up to and including 30 hours per week, 5%

from 31 hours per week and up to and including 60 hours per week, 7.5%

from 61 hours per week and up to and including 90 hours per week, 10%

from 91 hours per week and up to and including 119 hours, 12.5%

It is important to note that existing local agreements that already exist outside of the Grey Book are unaffected by this amendment.

CONTROL SPECIFIC ROLES – PAY RATES FROM 1 JULY 2024

	Basic annual* £	Basic hourly rate £	Overtime rate £
Firefighter (Control)			
Trainee	26,852	12.26	18.39
Development	27,970	12.77	19.16
Competent	35,791	16.34	24.51
Crew Manager (Control)			
Development	38,039	17.37	26.06
Competent	39,679	18.12	27.18
Watch Manager (Control)			
Development	40,538	18.51	27.77
Competent A	41,664	19.02	28.53
Competent B	44,372	20.26	30.39
Station Manager (Control)			
Development	46,151	21.07	31.61
Competent A	47,539	21.71	32.57
Competent B	50,907	23.25	34.88
Group Manager (Control)			
Development	53,155	24.27	Not applicable
Competent A	54,750	25.00	Not applicable
Competent B	58,927	26.91	Not applicable

*(95% of the respective firefighting role basic annual salary, as set out earlier)

NON-OPERATIONAL STAFF – PAY RATES FROM 1 JULY 2024

	£ per annum
Fire Control Operator equivalent	
During first six months	24,073
After six months and during 2nd year	25,141
During 3rd year	26,334
During 4th year	27,629
During 5th year	30,093
Leading Fire Control Operator equivalent	32,228
Senior Fire Control Operator equivalent	
During 1st year in rank	33,051
During 2nd year in rank	34,305

JUNIOR FIREFIGHTERS – PAY RATES FROM 1 JULY 2024

	£ per annum
Aged 16	13,076
Aged 17	14,050
Aged 18	28,265

CONTINUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) PAYMENTS FROM 1 JULY 2024

Fire authority	CPD (£)	Fire authority	CPD (£)
Avon	921	London	1,144
Bedfordshire	811	Merseyside	872
Buckinghamshire	702	Mid and West Wales	768
Cambridgeshire	719	Norfolk	757
Cheshire	930	Northern Ireland	785
Cleveland	1,185	Northamptonshire	823
Cornwall	373	Northumberland	1,005
Cumbria	646	North Wales	776
Derbyshire	959	North Yorkshire	571
Devon and Somerset	683	Nottinghamshire	1,149
Dorset and Wiltshire	864	Oxfordshire	854
Durham and Darlington	1,047	Royal Berkshire	857
East Sussex	678	Scotland	1,000
Essex	738	Shropshire	846
Gloucestershire	712	South Wales	805
Greater Manchester	1,123	South Yorkshire	1,257
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	801	Staffordshire	865
Hereford and Worcester	842	Suffolk	492
Hertfordshire	896	Surrey	886
Humberside	878	Tyne and Wear	1,211
Kent	788	Warwickshire	724
Lancashire	879	West Midlands	1,169
Leicestershire	820	West Sussex	639
Lincolnshire	480	West Yorkshire	1,068

CPD payments were published in circular NJC/4/24 and in the FBU's all members circular (2024HOC0218MW), after negotiations at the NJC.

A4 PAY DISCUSSIONS

In April 2024, the FBU reported on pay discussions since the pay claim for 2022 and 2023 had been settled (2024HOC0179MW). Fire employers agreed to begin discussions on some elements of the pay structure in the fire and rescue service, including the pay of retained duty system firefighters, the system of CPD and possible new systems for pay progression. They also agreed to a new job evaluation comparison for control firefighters. At the National Joint Council (NJC) in February, confidential reports were provided on various aspects of these joint discussions.

A5 FIRE EMPLOYERS' PAY OFFER

On 25 April 2024, fire employers wrote to the FBU with a pay offer that could be implemented in time for the settlement date in July. The key elements of the proposals were:

- An increase of 4% on all NJC rates of pay, including CPD
- A new system for the retainer for firefighters working the retained duty system, to increase the full cover rate from 10% to 15% of the basic pay
- An increase in maternity pay to 26 weeks' full pay and 13 weeks of statutory maternity pay.

The employers also offered to continue discussions on other pay concerns raised by the FBU.

The executive council assessed the offer and unanimously agreed to recommend that members should vote to accept the offer (2024HOC0193MW).

On 3 May, the FBU clarified the implications of the employers' pay offer for retained members in Northern Ireland (2024HOC0198BS).

A6 PAY BALLOT

On 29 April, the FBU began a consultative ballot of members on the employers' pay offer.

On 17 May, the FBU announced the pay ballot result. Almost three-quarters (73%) voted to accept the offer, after a 60% turnout (2024HOC0213MW).

On 21 May, the FBU published the pay settlement 2024, along with the relevant NJC circulars (2024HOC0218MW).

A7 CONTROL JOB EVALUATION

On 30 April, the FBU published the job evaluation report for emergency fire control staff (2024HOC0196MW).

As part of the 2022-23 pay settlement, fire service employers agreed to undertake a job evaluation of the role of firefighters (control) to assess whether there should be an alteration to the pay gap between control-specific roles and firefighting roles under the current Grey Book arrangements. The last such job evaluation was undertaken during negotiations to settle the 2002-03 pay dispute. Then, the job evaluation was the basis for narrowing the gap between the two rates of pay.

The NJC agreed to jointly commission Incomes Data Research (IDR), an independent pay research organisation, to conduct the job evaluation. The report concluded:

"The job evaluation scores indicate that while both roles are equivalent to an IDR Job Level 5, the score for firefighter is higher than that for fire control operator. In our view, this may provide grounds for a differential in pay between the two roles. However, we have serious concerns about evaluating roles based on paperwork drawn up almost two decades ago and recommend that the role maps are updated before reaching a conclusion on the role evaluations."

A8 NJC CIRCULAR DATABASE

In June, FBU head office created an electronic library of previous NJC circulars, as required by FBU conference.

A9 INDEPENDENT PAY RESEARCH

The FBU commissioned Incomes Data Research (IDR), the widely respected pay consultants, to assess firefighters' pay ahead of the union's pay claim. The IDR research highlighted the effects of Westminster government-imposed pay freezes (2010-11) and pay caps (2012-2017), which applied to all public sector workers and held pay below inflation.

The IDR found that since 2010, basic pay for competent wholetime firefighters was reduced by 12% compared to pay scales uprated by the Consumer Prices Index (CPI). The research also examined relative pay in other sectors.

A10 PAY CLAIM 2025

On 9 December 2024, the FBU wrote to the fire service employers giving early notification to start talks on pay for 2025 as soon as possible. The intention was to reach an early settlement, delivering the pay increase for 1 July. The letter sought to build on the previous recent settlements (2024HOC0448MW).

A11 NON-COMPLIANT APPRENTICE SCHEMES

On 11 November, the FBU informed members that at least one fire and rescue service had implemented an apprenticeship scheme on terms below those agreed with the union. A brigade secretaries circular set out how officials must immediately challenge any local apprenticeship scheme to ensure the policy is upheld (2024HOC0422BS). The FBU underlined that any fire apprentice undertaking operational duties of a firefighter (including operational training) and/or posted to or working at an operational fire station must be in receipt of agreed national Grey Book rates of pay (2024HOC0421MW).

A12 NJC – FBU AND EMPLOYERS' REPS

Employees' side		Employers' side	
<i>Fire Brigades Union</i>		<i>Local Government Association</i>	
Colin Brown	David Shek	Greg Brackenridge	Carolyn Lambert
Cerith Griffiths	Les Skarratts	Frank Biederman	B Nutley
Val Hampshire	Pete Smith	Nick Chard	Michael Payne
Ian Murray	Peter Trayner	Nikki Hennessy	Roger Phillips
Jim Quinn	Matt Wrack	Roger Hirst	Tim Roca
Paul Revill	Steve Wright		
Ben Selby		<i>Scottish FRS</i>	<i>Welsh LGA</i>
		Kirsty Darwent	Jane Gebbie
		Fiona Thorburn	
		<i>Northern Ireland FRS</i>	
		Jay Colville	

A13 MIDDLE MANAGERS NEGOTIATING BODY (MMNB)

Employees' side		Employers' side	
<i>Fire Brigades Union</i>		<i>Local Government Association</i>	
Greg Ashman	Ian Murray	Greg Brackenridge	Carolyn Lambert
Colin Brown	Jim Quinn	Frank Biederman	B Nutley
Nick Bourke	Ben Selby	Nick Chard	Michael Payne
Richie Green	Peter Trayner	Nikki Hennessy	Roger Phillips
Cerith Griffiths	Matt Wrack	Roger Hirst	Tim Roca
Val Hampshire	Steve Wright		
		<i>Scottish FRS</i>	<i>Welsh LGA</i>
		Kirsty Darwent	Jane Gebbie
		Fiona Thorburn	
<i>Fire Officers Association</i>		<i>Northern Ireland FRS</i>	
Ade Robinson		Jay Colville	

SECTION B

PENSIONS

B1 INTRODUCTION

During 2024, the FBU continued to fight for pensions justice on behalf of members. During the year, key pensions matters included:

- injury to feelings claims
- age discrimination remedies
- retained firefighters' pensions
- other remedies.

There are four pension schemes relevant to firefighters: the 1992 Firefighters Pension Scheme (FPS), the 2006 New Firefighters Pension Scheme (NFPS), the 2015 Firefighters Pension Scheme and the Retained Firefighters Modified Scheme. The devolved governments' pension schemes broadly follow these pension schemes, with local variations.

Control staff are not permitted to join those pension schemes, despite FBU campaigning to include all firefighters in them. Instead, control staff are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS).

FBU representatives sit on the Scheme Advisory Boards (SABs) or equivalents in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

B2 INJURY TO FEELINGS

In 2018, the FBU won a legal challenge on age discrimination against the Westminster government's changes regarding transition protection for firefighters who were previously in the 1992 scheme. This ruling is known as the McCloud judgment and benefited other public sector workers too. As a result of the ruling, remedies have to be made.

The FBU and its solicitors Thompsons have made injury to feelings claims as part of the remedy. There are four different waves:

- first wave claims, issued in 2015
- tapered wave claims, issued in 2020
- second wave claims, issued in 2021
- third wave claims, issued in early 2024.

On 12 April 2024, the FBU updated members involved in the first wave of claims. The update forewarned members affected that they would receive a letter from Thompsons with instructions on how to proceed, given their individual circumstances (2024HOC0176MR).

In July, the FBU provided a comprehensive update to officials and members on all four waves of injury to feelings claims. On 2 July, head office organised an online briefing for brigade secretaries and chairs.

The FBU has more than five thousand members in the first wave. Most are seeking the 'standard' level of injury to feelings compensation. The work has generated considerable correspondence for Thompsons.

The tapered claims relate to members who, at the time of the initial reforms in 2015, had some time-limited (tapering) protection, but would continue to accrue historic pension benefits depending on their age and proximity to retirement. Tapered wave claims were issued in 2020 and involve almost three thousand members. These cases were stayed at the time.

Second wave claims were predominantly registered by members in 2020. There are more than two thousand claims in this wave.

Third wave claims were issued by Thompsons at the start of 2024, following a final audit undertaken by Walkers Solicitors. At present, there are fewer than two hundred of these claims.

The injury to feelings claims in Scotland and Northern Ireland remain stayed, pending the conclusion of the negotiations over England and Wales claims. The devolved administrations are expected to treat their claims in a consistent manner with the outcome of negotiations in England and Wales.

Members were advised that discussions with the Government Legal Department are subject to legal privilege, limiting what the union can publish on these matters (2024HOC2085MR).

On 20 December, the FBU updated members on injury to feeling claims. The union announced that a binding agreement had finally been reached for more than three thousand members in the first wave of proceedings lodged in 2015. It is likely that three or four agreements will be needed to address the position of all the claimants in the first wave (2024HOC0471MR).

B3 INJURY TO FEELINGS NFPS 2006

On 4 July, the FBU explained the situation for members in the New Firefighters Pension Scheme (NFPS) 2006. Claimants in the original age discrimination legal proceedings were all members of the Firefighters Pension Scheme 1992. However, members of the NFPS 2006 may also benefit from the primary outcome of the claim. When they take their benefits, they will be offered a choice: they can choose to have the pension they accrued between 1 April 2015 and the date they were transferred to the 2015 scheme, treated as membership of the NFPS or as membership of the 2015 scheme.

Retained firefighters who joined the NFPS on the terms of the Modified NFPS also have strong compensation claims for injury to feelings. Injury to feelings claims for NFPS members who are not on the Modified NFPS terms are more complicated, and the FBU's legal advisers wrote to all NFPS members who completed the surveys on the union's website to explain why (2024HOC0286MR).

B4 REMEDIABLE SERVICE STATEMENT

On 7 June, the FBU informed members of delays to the age discrimination remedy process. Under the Public Service Pensions and Judicial Offices Act 2022, firefighters eligible under the age discrimination remedy must be written to, informing them that information will be made available about their benefit options. The mechanism for this is a Remediable Service Statement, which must be sent out by 31 March 2025, or sooner if possible.

The matter affected retired members awaiting remedy under immediate choice. The issue related to the calculation required for top-up lump sums and the offsetting of previous tax paid to HM Revenue and Customs (2024HOC0253MR).

On 28 June, the FBU informed members that the general secretary would write to the new government immediately after the general election, with a route to resolve the matter immediately for firefighters (2024HOC0271MR).

B5 AGE DISCRIMINATION REMEDY

On 3 September, the FBU updated members on two specific matters arising from the age discrimination remedy (2024HOC0344MR). First, the union provided the statutory deadlines for the annual benefit statement and remediable service statement. Second, the union informed members that Treasury directions for tax relief on contributions for active members would be amended, to allow active members to be treated in the same way as non-active members.

B6 AGE DISCRIMINATION FAQs

On 7 November, the FBU provided members with links to updated frequently asked questions (FAQs) in relation to age discrimination remedy and the Matthews second options exercise. These FAQs are produced by the Scheme Advisory Boards or their equivalent in the devolved administrations. The FBU is represented on each of these boards. The FAQs provide answers to most pensions-related questions and are a valuable resource for members and officials (2024HOC0419MR).

B7 CONTINGENT DECISIONS

On 31 July, the FBU updated members on the legal position of those originally in the Firefighters Pension Scheme 1992 and who opted out as a direct consequence of the introduction of the 2015 scheme.

Previously, those affected were informed that their decision could be retrospectively reconsidered under a Contingent Decision, allowing them to return to the 1992 scheme. Unfortunately, the law does not permit that option, because the Firefighters Pension Scheme 1992 is a closed scheme.

Fire employers have contacted those firefighters affected to explain that the only scheme they can be reinstated to is the 2006 New Firefighters Pension Scheme (2024HOC0322MR).

B8 RETAINED FIREFIGHTERS' PENSIONS

On 19 June, the FBU updated members on pension claims for firefighters working the retained duty system. The matter concerned an employment tribunal decision in 2000, which found that retained firefighters treated less favourably when it came to pensions (and other matters) had been discriminated against as part-time workers. Thompsons sent final letters to claimants who had not yet responded. The FBU also explained how the second option process worked. The circular also updated members about claims for aggregation and consequential loss (2024HOC0264MR).

On 26 November, the FBU provided a further update for retained firefighters affected by the discrimination. The circular covered 'aggregation claims', pre-6 April 2000 transfers to wholetime, consequential loss claims and claimants who are deceased (2024HOC0435MR).

B9 APPRENTICE FIREFIGHTERS

On 9 January, the FBU informed members about the union's intervention to protect apprentice firefighters, who had been enrolled in Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), rather than the Firefighters Pension Scheme 2015. Recruit and apprentice firefighters are eligible to join the 2015 scheme and must be provided with that option. The FBU successfully resolved the matter (2024HOC0011MR).

B10 SCHEME ADVISORY BOARD REPRESENTATIVES

The FBU was represented on the following boards:

Firefighters Pensions Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) England: Mark Rowe, Tony Curry, Andrew Fox-Hewitt and Adam Taylor.

Firefighters Pensions Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) Wales: Mark Rowe, Cerith Griffiths and Gareth Tovey.

Firefighters (Northern Ireland) Scheme Advisory Board (SAB): Mark Rowe and Jim Quinn.

Scottish Firefighters' Pension Scheme Advisory Board: Mark Rowe, Colin Brown and John McKenzie.

SECTION C

OPERATIONS, HEALTH AND SAFETY

C1 INTRODUCTION

During 2024, the FBU stepped up the fight to protect members' health and safety. The FBU's decontamination (DECON) project, based on independent commissioned research by the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan), published further original research on firefighters who attended the Grenfell Tower fire.

The FBU continued to engage critically with the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) on health and safety matters. The FBU health and safety committee monitored campaigns and initiatives. FBU safety reps continued to represent members.

C2 DECON RESEARCH

This year, two new peer-reviewed studies, commissioned by the FBU and carried out by UCLan, were published in the prestigious international peer-reviewed scientific publication, the *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*.

- Stec, Anna; Purser, David; Hull, Richard, 'Grenfell Tower Fire: Firefighters' Activities and Their Exposure to Fire Smoke and Heat', *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine* 67 (1): p e1-e11, January 2025.
- Stec, Anna; Purser, David; Hull, Richard, 'Grenfell Tower Fire: Toxic Effluents and Assessment of Firefighters' Health Impacts', *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine* 67 (1): p e12-e21, January 2025.

The research found that over a quarter of surveyed firefighters who attended the Grenfell Tower fire now suffer from long-term health disorders. The team of highly respected academics analysed available data from 524 of the 628 firefighters who attended the disaster. They found that 136 firefighters who were exposed to toxic smoke at Grenfell now suffer from long-term health disorders. Firefighters reported life-changing health effects, including cases of digestive diseases, respiratory diseases, neurological diseases and 11 cancers. The FBU demanded health monitoring to save lives.

C3 DECON AND HSE

In May 2024, the FBU reported on discussions with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) about its inspection plans for the following year. HSE told the FBU it was developing an inspection initiative to regulate how fire and rescue services work to mitigate and prevent exposure to cancer and disease-causing contaminants. The inspections include procedures and practices, from the fire ground to how PPE and workwear are laundered. HSE officials carried out a number of fact-finding visits to inform standards to inspect on (2024HOC0209RLT).

In December, head office officials informed members that regular meetings with HSE had taken place and confirmed that HSE's April 2025 business plan was on track to inspect fire and rescue services in blocks of ten (2024HOC0451MW).

C4 DECON AND GP REGISTRATION

In May 2024, head office asked local FBU officials to promote the DECON website tool to assist members in recording their profession with their GP. The union underlined the importance of early diagnosis and treatment. The FBU and UCLan jointly manage the Firefighter Cancer and Disease register (2024HOC0211RLT).

C5 EU LAW ACCEPTS FIREFIGHTING IS CARCINOGENIC

On 7 February, the European Parliament updated the EU directive on carcinogens, mutagens and reprotoxins at work, to include the occupational exposure of firefighters.

The EPSU European firefighters' network, the umbrella body of firefighter unions across Europe that includes the FBU, lobbied for this update after the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) recognised professional exposure as a firefighter as carcinogenic. The final text of the directive stated:

"The World Health Organization has classified the occupational exposure of firefighters as carcinogenic (Group 1). Occupational exposure of firefighters includes a variety of hazards resulting from fires and non-fire events. Firefighters can be exposed to combustion products from fires, building materials, chemicals in firefighting foams, flame retardants and diesel exhaust. The uptake of fire effluents or other chemicals can occur by inhalation and dermal absorption and possibly via ingestion. Such workers should therefore be better protected from such exposure."

Although this does not impose direct obligations on employers or member states, it does mean that the IARC classification's validity is now part of EU law (2024HOC0130RLT).

C6 MENTAL HEALTH

During 2024, the FBU took major steps in the campaign on firefighters' mental health. The FBU has developed a research project through the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan). The project is led by Dr Carolina Campodonico, an expert in trauma, resilience and psychosis. Professor Anna Stec is also working on the project.

In February, the FBU announced the first stage of the research. The union asked officials to ensure that a survey of fire and rescue services sent to the local chief fire officers was completed. The survey sought to obtain information about current levels of mental health provision in each service (2024HOC0093MW).

In April, the FBU set out the next stage of the project, when the academic team conducted interviews with volunteers chosen from among our officials. All relevant information on welfare and confidentiality was provided (2024HOC0171RLT).

In October, the FBU announced the third stage of the project, which required a survey of all members. A pilot was carried out first to ensure the survey was suitable for members (2024HOC0389RLT).

C7 BA SAFETY

On 4 April 2024, the FBU alerted officials to an urgent safety concern. Head office was made aware of a video demonstrating a BA set torch magnet coming into contact with a Draeger Bodyguard unit while the ADSU was activating, the contact silenced and reset the audible alarm.

After a simple re-creation with a different torch magnet and bodyguard unit by FBU safety reps, the same fault occurred again. The set in both circumstances was a Draeger PSS 7000. FBU officials were asked to investigate and report their findings urgently (2024HOC0165RLT).

On 8 May, FBU officials were asked to investigate after technical deficiencies in some MSA Breathing Apparatus equipment were raised by FBU safety reps (2024HOC0207RLT).

On 26 July, the FBU provided an update on the range of problems reported with MSA BA sets, particularly the G1 face mask. Independent scientific advisers were brought into the London Fire Brigade to test masks and sets that had been impounded. The advisers found no evidence of any smoke ingress into a face mask during operation. The results, however, did identify the presence of fibres and/or paint flakes and/or metal shards within a significant number of the masks tested. The FBU took legal advice and reported the matter to HSE (2024HOC0318RLT).

C8 GAS MONITORING EQUIPMENT

In April, the FBU issued an urgent safety circular on the use and limitations of gas monitoring equipment. FBU officials learned from the NFCC of a deficiency in understanding of the use, sensitivity and limitations of gas monitoring equipment. The circular asked for immediate investigation and feedback, to inform discussions between scientific advisors and the Home Office (2024HOC0166RLT).

C9 TOILET AND WELFARE FACILITIES AT WORK

In October, the FBU circulated a TUC survey into toilet and welfare facilities at work. This has been an important topic for safety and equalities. Members were urged to participate, so that the situation in control rooms, fire stations, training centres and other workplaces would be included in the campaign (2024HOC0409RLT).

C10 FBU HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

During 2024, the FBU's regional health and safety representatives committee held the following meetings:

- 28 March
- 29 May
- 17 October
- 27 November.

The committee meetings discussed important matters such as contaminants, mental health, breathing apparatus safety, serious accident investigations and other local matters. Members of the committee and other officials organised and attended DECON stalls at fire and trade union conferences.

C11 MEMORIAL DAYS

On 28 April 2024, FBU members across the UK took part in International Workers' Memorial Day, to campaign for workers' safety under the banner, *Remember the Dead, Fight for the Living* (2024HOC0168MW).

On 4 May, FBU members across the UK marked Firefighters Memorial Day. The union encouraged all members on duty to participate in a minute's silence at midday where possible at their workplaces.

SECTION D

FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY

D1 INTRODUCTION

During 2024, the FBU made important interventions in fire and rescue service policy, especially on safety matters arising from the Grenfell Tower public inquiry. The FBU welcomed the formation of the Ministerial Advisory Group. The union made responses to the Westminster government, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC). The FBU continued to speak for the profession on fire safety and related matters.

D2 MINISTERIAL ADVISORY GROUP

On 4 December 2024, Matt Wrack and Riccardo la Torre attended the inaugural Ministerial Advisory Group, on behalf of the FBU. The Ministerial Advisory Group was convened by Home Office fire minister Diana Johnson, to ensure the Westminster government gets expert opinion from across the fire and rescue service. The FBU welcomed the initiative and played an active part in the first meeting, raising longstanding issues on behalf of members. The FBU has been shut out of regular channels to central government for the last two decades. The union wants a statutory advisory body to advise governments, produce national standards and improve equalities. The Ministerial Advisory Group could become a crucial lever towards these improvements, which will benefit the public and firefighters.

D3 HMICFRS

On 9 May, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) published its latest State of Fire and Rescue report. The FBU argued that it did not add much to the discussion on the future of the fire and rescue service.

Chief inspector Andy Cooke recognised the influence of the FBU within the fire and rescue service, but used his report to attack collective bargaining through the National Joint Council, which has brought about many improvements in areas the inspectorate is concerned about, such as pay, conditions, the role of firefighters and equalities.

The report doggedly pushed the policing model, which has little support in the fire and rescue service. It also pushed operational independence for chief fire officers, a dangerous proposition, further undermining vital systems of accountability and democracy for our fire services. The FBU argued that HMICFRS should hold chief fire officers to account and must be truly independent to improve the fire and rescue service.

D4 NFCC

During 2024, the FBU continued to engage with and monitor the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), which is at the centre of many fire and rescue matters across the UK, including the Fire Standards Board.

The NFCC is a private company with charitable status worth approximately £12m, funded largely by Home Office grants and local fire and rescue service transfers. They generate products and services for the UK fire and rescue service in the form of guidance, including National Operational Guidance.

The majority of the content on the NFCC website is hidden behind a membership log-in, available only to professional partners, individual members and commercial members. During 2024, the FBU was given access to this content for the first time.

D5 MARAUDING TERRORIST ATTACK (MTA)

The FBU continued to advocate for a UK-wide marauding terrorist attack (MTA) at agreement through the National Joint Council. During 2024, the union urged employers and the government to address this critical issue.

In November, FBU reps intervened after Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service said it would utilise firefighters and officers as specialist responders for over-the-border marauding terrorist attack deployments.

Local officials in Greater Manchester promptly challenged the proposal. The local collective agreements in Greater Manchester and London do not extend beyond the borders of their respective services. Officials also raised immediate concerns about the pre-determined attendance for those incident types, as well as significant health and safety concerns.

Local and head office officials met with politicians, including Greater Manchester mayor Andy Burnham, confirming support for the terms of the local agreement (2024HOC0427BS).

D6 FIRE POLICY AFTER GRENFELL

In February, the FBU wrote to our officials and ministers regarding two important findings from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry that have implications for fire policy.

First, Dr Ivan Stoianov gave expert testimony on the provision and use of water for firefighting to public inquiry. His testimony made clear that fire hydrants across the UK may not meet the requirements of the relevant British Standard and may, in fact, flow less water than expected, with clear implications for firefighter safety (2024HOC0095MW).

Second, Professor David Purser gave expert testimony to the inquiry on the subject of toxicology. He stated incapacity and death from smoke inhalation is caused, in most cases, by carbon monoxide poisoning, and carbon monoxide uptake in young children occurs at almost approximately twice the rate of that in an adult. This has important implications for high rise and other public safety policy (2024HOC0094MW).

FBU officials were asked to raise these matters with brigade principal managers, safety committees and other channels of negotiation. Leading FBU officials have raised it with relevant ministers and chief fire officers.

D7 EMERGENCY EVACUATION GUIDELINES

In February, the Home Office published high rise evacuation guidelines for fire and rescue services. This was the Home Office's response to the one recommendation made to the Westminster government by the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 report in October 2019. It had taken the Home Office more than four years to publish its response, which consisted of just nine common sense truisms.

On 1 March, the FBU wrote to ministers and members to complain about the guidance, which does not help fire and rescue services to improve their high rise evacuation policies. The Home Office did not clarify how many firefighters and what equipment is necessary to ensure a swift, safe evacuation. Instead they once again passed responsibility to the NFCC. Sadly, the NFCC had already produced some flawed guidance of their own, including the 'waking watches' that residents have quite rightly been unhappy with (2024HOC0128MW).

D8 COVID-19 INQUIRY

On 18 July, the public inquiry into the Covid-19 pandemic published its Module 1 report, confirming that the Westminster government failed to prepare for such a crisis. Although the report did not refer to the failure of ministers and their advisers to ready the fire and rescue service for the pandemic, it nevertheless pointed to several themes which the FBU has raised over many years.

On 2 August, the FBU wrote to prime minister Keir Starmer. The union broadly welcomed the inquiry recommendations, but insisted that the fire and rescue service is properly represented in the existing and new structures. That meant giving the FBU, as the main representatives of the workforce, a key role. It definitely cannot be left to the NFCC to represent the service (2024HOC0323MW).

D9 TRUTH ABOUT ZANE

In February, the FBU supported an Early Day Motion (EDM) laid in the Westminster parliament, calling for an independent panel inquiry into the death of Zane Gbangbola. The FBU has supported the Truth about Zane campaign from the beginning. FBU members and officials were asked to contact their MPs and request that they sign this EDM. It already has strong cross-party support and raises many important arguments about a number of campaigns.

In August, the FBU co-signed a letter with the TUC, Unison, CWU, NEU, Unite, and Ian Byrne MP. The letter, sent to the new prime minister Keir Starmer, called for an Independent Panel Inquiry into the death of Zane Gbangbola (2024HOC0324MW).

D10 FLOODING

In November, the FBU commended members for the professional response to Storm Bert, which included flooding and extreme weather across the UK. Firefighters are the only professionals trained and equipped to tackle the scale of flooding and other extreme weather that happens every year.

The FBU raised the longstanding demand for more resources now and for the future, so the fire and rescue service can tackle floods. The union wants a statutory duty to respond to flooding in England, which has been won in all three devolved administrations. The FBU also wants UK-wide standards of flood response, to better protect the public and ensure firefighters have the right kit to do the work safely (2024HOC0434MW).

D11 DBS CHECKS

On 15 February, the FBU sent members a circular regarding Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) processes and issues DBS checks for England, Wales, the Channel Islands, and the Isle of Man.

On 6 July 2023, the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2023 came into force. This Order amends the earlier legislation, adding new paragraphs to Part 1 (professions). This now includes fire and rescue authority employees.

When this new law came into force, the Disclosure and Barring Service and the NFCC published guidance. The purpose of the guidance is to provide a framework for all fire and rescue services in England and Wales to understand what eligibility checks should be considered. Services in Scotland and Northern Ireland have their own local guidance.

FBU officials were advised to familiarise themselves with this guidance, as it will be referred to by principal managers in any casework on DBS checks involving members (2024HOC0101BS).

D12 EXTERNAL MEETINGS

During 2024, FBU officials and staff attended a range of fire sector policy events, including:

- Fire Sector Federation, January
- NFCC Operational Response, 26-27 February
- Institution of Fire Engineers Strategy Development, 8 March
- Emergency Services Show, 18-19 September
- FPA, IFE, NFCC and FSF Fire Conference, 24 October
- FireFit, 28 November
- London Build expo, 20-21 November
- FIREX, 2-4 December.

SECTION E

GOVERNMENT POLICY AND LEGISLATION

E1 INTRODUCTION

The Westminster government and the devolved administrations make the major decisions about policy and funding for fire and rescue services across the UK. Hence, the FBU engages in political work at all levels.

During 2024, the FBU made submissions to governments at Westminster and the devolved administrations, organised lobbies attended by FBU members, held meetings with ministers and civil servants, produced briefings and bulletins, as well as joining wider campaigns. 2024 saw significant changes across Westminster and the devolved administrations, with a general election in July 2024 and changes in role-holders across the devolved administrations.

E2 GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE – ENGLAND

The Home Office is responsible for the fire and rescue service in England. James Cleverly served as the Home Secretary from November 2023 until the general election in July 2024. After the election, Yvette Cooper MP was appointed Home Secretary and she remains in this post. Chris Philp was the fire minister until the general election. Diana Johnson MP took up this role in July 2024. Alex Norris MP took over the building safety brief in October 2024 after Rushanara Ali MP resigned.

FBU officials held several meetings with ministers and government officials during the year.

E3 GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE – NORTHERN IRELAND

The fire and rescue service in Northern Ireland is a devolved matter and the responsibility of the Department of Health. In May 2024, the Northern Ireland Assembly returned after it had collapsed. Mike Nesbitt of the Ulster Unionist Party was appointed Health Minister. FBU officials held a number of meetings with politicians from all parties during the year.

E4 GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE – SCOTLAND

The fire and rescue service in Scotland is a devolved matter and the responsibility of the Scottish Government. The Department of Justice and Home Affairs has responsibility for the fire and rescue service in Scotland. Angela Constance was Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs and Siobhain Brown was Minister for Victims and Community Safety.

John Swinney took over as First Minister of Scotland from Humza Yousaf on 8 May 2024. FBU officials held meetings with cabinet secretaries, ministers, and numerous Members of Scottish Parliament (MSPs) during the year.

E5 GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE – WALES

The fire and rescue service in Wales is a devolved matter and the responsibility of the Welsh Government. At the beginning of 2024, Hannah Blythyn, minister for social partnership, held responsibility for the fire and rescue service in Wales. In May 2024, she was replaced by Sarah Murphy. In July 2024, Jane Bryant was appointed cabinet secretary for housing and local government. Her responsibilities include the fire and rescue service in Wales.

From the beginning of 2024 until 20 March 2024, Mark Drakeford was the First Minister of Wales. Vaughan Gething held this role from 20 March 2024 to 5 August 2024, when Eluned Morgan was elected. Eluned Morgan remains the First Minister. The FBU held meetings with ministers, Senedd members and Welsh government fire branch civil servants during the year.

E6 POLITICAL INTERVENTION AT WESTMINSTER

During 2024, the FBU briefed MPs on important legislation. The FBU produced five issues of the *Fire and Rescue Service Matters* bulletin aimed at ministers and elected representatives in parliament. These were on funding for the fire and rescue service, the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Report, job cuts, and the statutory duty to respond to flooding. On 5 March, Matt Wrack gave evidence at the Home Office Select Committee for the inquiry into culture in fire and rescue services.

On 8 October, the FBU organised a successful ‘Time to Deliver’ rally at the Emmanuel Centre in Westminster. This marked the launch of the ‘Time to Deliver’ campaign aimed at securing investment in the fire and rescue service and creating a statutory advisory committee. The rally welcomed speakers from across the FBU, international firefighters, and Zarah Sultana MP. FBU members met with over 80 MPs on the day from across the political spectrum.

E7 POLITICAL INTERVENTION IN NORTHERN IRELAND

During the year FBU officials and members engaged with Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) and other politicians from all parties in Northern Ireland: the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), Sinn Féin, Ulster Unionists, Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) and the Alliance Party. FBU officials also held regular meetings with Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service (NIFRS) principal officers and the Fire Board. In addition to these meetings, the FBU also attended the major political party conferences to lobby on issues affecting firefighters.

E8 POLITICAL INTERVENTION IN SCOTLAND

During the year Scottish FBU regional officials engaged regularly with Cabinet Secretaries, Ministers, MSPs and the leaders of all parties at Holyrood and Scottish MPs in Westminster. FBU officials also held regular meetings with Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) principal managers.

On 25 June, the FBU made a submission to the Social Security Directorate consultation on Employment Injury Assistance. On 22 August, the FBU made a submission to the Scottish Criminal Justice Committee, *Pre-budget scrutiny consultation 2025-2026*. The union opposed cuts in funding to the SFRS.

On 29 November, the FBU made a submission to the SFRS consultation, *Strategic Plan 2022-25: Your Views*. The FBU upheld public safety and argued for sustained investment, as part of the campaign to improve firefighters' conditions at work.

E9 POLITICAL INTERVENTION IN WALES

During 2024, the Wales Social Partnership Forum for Fire and Rescue Services continued to meet. The FBU represents firefighters on the forum, which includes senior civil servants, chief fire officers and employers' representatives. During the year it met quarterly and discussed a range of issues, including equalities and culture, CFRAI's reports, retained firefighters' recruitment and retention, fair release for union officials and the union's DECON campaign. FBU officials also held regular meetings with fire and rescue service principal managers across Wales.

E10 MINIMUM SERVICE LEVELS – FIRE

On 8 February 2024, the Westminster government announced its detailed plans for minimum service levels to be imposed on the fire and rescue service in England (2024HOC0102MW). Failure to comply with these draconian measures would expose individual members to risk of the sack, while the FBU would also face substantial fines and other penalties.

The regulations meant that if the FBU gave notice of strike action to a fire and rescue authority, the authority could issue a 'work notice' against the union ahead of the strike. The work notice would identify the workers required to work, and specifies the work that they are required to carry out during the strike, even if they had voted to take action in a legal ballot.

The minimum service level regulations provide for the normal functions of a control room to be carried out during industrial action, 'as if it were a non-strike day'. This was effectively a strike ban against control staff.

The regulations set out the minimum service levels for firefighting functions. The percentage set was 73% of appliances in the regulations. So even if all five riders had voted to strike, only one would be permitted to strike, with the remaining four forced to work. The minimum service level for national resilience assets was also set as if the strike were not taking place that day.

The Conservative government introduced these new restrictions on trade union freedoms, but did so with the support of some chief fire officers. Ministers claimed that "the majority of fire and rescue services were in favour of a nationally set minimum service level but with some degree of local flexibility". The government response stated:

"A total of 72 consultation responses were submitted. The majority of English FRSs (38 of 44) submitted some form of response, either a bespoke response or a letter stating that their views aligned with those set out in the response submitted by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC)."

E11 MINIMUM SERVICE LEVELS – CAMPAIGN

The minimum service levels imposed on the fire and rescue service in England were aimed at weakening the FBU and its members. During 2024, the FBU fought a sustained campaign against the regulations in general, which applied to a range of workers, as well as those applying to the fire and rescue service.

In March, the FBU wrote to all fire employers, demanding a commitment not to issue work notices (2024HOC0138MW). This resulted in the devolved administrations, together with many fire authorities, mayors and councillors pledging never to implement the proposed laws.

On 12 March, the Westminster parliament held proceedings on the Draft Strikes (Minimum Service Levels: Fire and Rescue Services) (England) Regulations 2024. The FBU briefed MPs. Shadow fire minister Alex Norris, as well as Labour MPs John McDonnell and Andrew Western, made powerful speeches against the minimum service levels. Despite these efforts, the new laws were forced through.

The Labour Party committed to repealing minimum service levels in its general election manifesto. In August, the recently-elected Labour government directed employers to disregard minimum service levels, which would be repealed in its Employment Rights Bill (2024HOC0326MW).

E12 GRENFELL TOWER FIRE AND PUBLIC INQUIRY

On 4 September 2024, the Grenfell Tower Inquiry (GTI) published its Phase 2 report. After seven years, this brought the public inquiry to a close. The FBU was a core participant of the inquiry and represented the interests of firefighters and control staff throughout (2024HOC0345MW).

The FBU shared the grief and anger of the bereaved, survivors and residents of Grenfell Tower. When the report was published, the union said it was first and foremost a time to remember 72 people who tragically lost their lives in a horrific and entirely preventable disaster.

For decades before the fire, and years after it, the FBU warned that deregulation, privatisation and cuts were endangering lives. The public inquiry report vindicated the union's position. It made clear that the Grenfell Tower fire was the result of decades of failure by central government to regulate the building industry – the prioritisation of private profit over human life.

The FBU briefed members, politicians and the media in the days following the report's publication. Head office officials met with ministers to discuss the recommendations.

E13 APPG ON FIRE SAFETY

During 2024, the FBU attended meetings of the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Fire Safety at Westminster. The FBU helped to found the group two decades ago. It has been an authoritative voice, warning on fire safety over many years. The APPG frequently has ministers and other speakers attend its proceedings. The FBU has raised issues such as DECON, school safety and Grenfell-related matters with other attendees.

E14 FBU PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

The FBU organises a parliamentary group to advance firefighters' interests at Westminster, where many key decisions are made that affect the fire and rescue service. The group was chaired by Zarah Sultana MP.

The aim of the group is to inform MPs of firefighter issues and influence the direction of government policy. The FBU parliamentary group is a campaigning group. It is not comprised of MPs who have any financial relationship with the union because of their membership, rather those who wish to work with the union and in the interests of FBU members.

The group normally meets regularly while the House of Commons is sitting, so the union can brief MPs on its current campaigns. The union provides a written report to all group meetings. During the year, a wide range of issues were raised, including firefighters' pay and conditions, the impact of cuts on the service and the Grenfell Tower fire.

Region	Member of Parliament	Constituency
3	Alex Cunningham	Stockton North
	Mary Kelly Foy	City of Durham
	Mary Glendon	North Tyneside
	Ian Lavery	Wansbeck
	Andy McDonald	Middlesbrough
	Ian Mearns	Gateshead
	Grahame Morris	Easington
	Kate Osborne	Jarrow
	Liz Twist	Blaydon
4	Olivia Blake	Sheffield Hallam
	Richard Burgon	Leeds East
	Gill Furniss	Sheffield Brightside and Hillsborough
	Louise Haigh	Sheffield Heeley
	Imran Hussain	Bradford East
	Rachael Maskell	York Central
	Karl Turner	Hull East
5	Mike Amesbury	Weaver Vale
	Paula Barker	Liverpool Wavertree
	Ian Byrne	Liverpool West Derby
	Dan Carden	Liverpool Walton
	Peter Dowd	Bootle
	Kim Johnson	Liverpool Riverside
	Rebecca Long-Bailey	Salford and Eccles
	Conor McGinn	St Helens North
	Jim McMahon	Oldham West and Royton
	Nav Mishra	Stockport
	Angela Rayner	Ashton-Under-Lyne
	Cat Smith	Lancaster and Fleetwood
	Mick Whitley	Birkenhead
6	Nadia Whittome	Nottingham East
7	Tahir Ali	Birmingham Hall Green
	Zarah Sultana (chair)	Coventry South

8	Nia Griffith	Llanelli
	Jo Stevens	Cardiff Central
	Beth Winter	Cynon Valley
9	Clive Lewis	Norwich South
	Mohammad Yasin	Bedford
	Sarah Owen	Luton North
	Rachel Hopkins	Luton South
10	Apsana Begum	Poplar and Limehouse
	Jeremy Corbyn	Islington North
	Jon Cruddas	Dagenham and Rainham
	John Cryer	Leyton and Wanstead
	John McDonnell	Hayes and Harlington
	Abena Oppong-Asare	Erith and Thamesmead
11	Lloyd Russell-Moyle	Brighton Kemptown
13	Kerry McCarthy	Bristol East

E15 TRADE UNION CO-ORDINATING GROUP (TUCG)

The FBU is a member of the Trade Union Co-ordinating Group (TUCG), which co-ordinates campaigning activities at Westminster on issues of common concern between member unions. The TUCG currently comprises 10 trade unions: Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union (BFAWU), FBU, Napo – the probation and family court staff union, National Union of Journalists (NUJ), National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT), National Education Union (NEU), Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS), Prison Officers Association (POA), United Road Transport Union (URTU) and University and College Union (UCU). The TUCG executive council met every two months during the year and organised events at TUC congress and at Westminster.

SECTION F

TRADE UNION AND LABOUR MOVEMENT

F1 INTRODUCTION

During 2024, FBU delegations attended some importance conferences, including the TUC and STUC. The FBU participated in campaigns, conferences and within the Labour Party to make sure firefighters' views were heard. The FBU maintained its affiliations to a broad range of local, national and international campaigns.

F2 TUC CONGRESS

The annual Trades Union Congress (TUC) took place in Brighton on 8-11 September 2024. The FBU's delegation was Ian Murray, Steve Wright, Maria Buck, Jamie Newell, Robyn Richardson and Riccardo la Torre.

The delegation moved two resolutions at the conference, on the repeal of the anti-union laws and investment in our fire and rescue service. Both were carried. They also amended motions on climate change and workers' health, and on the national food strategy. The FBU supported a range of fringe meetings.

Matt Wrack was TUC president. He gave a presidential address and chaired the Congress. Wrack was re-elected to the TUC general council and executive committee.

F3 WOMEN'S CONFERENCES

TUC women's conference took place in London on 6-8 March 2024. The FBU delegates were Robyn Richardson, Kerry McCrone and Leoni Munslow. The FBU submitted resolutions on 'Cancer as an industrial injury for firefighters' and 'Fight for 52'. Leoni Munslow was invited to speak on the panel at the fringe meeting on women winning in the workplace, which discussed the success of our Fight for 52 campaign so far.

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions women's conference was held on 7-8 March 2024. FBU representative Jess Doran moved a motion on 'Cancer as an industrial injury for firefighters'.

Delegates to STUC women's conference on 23-24 October 2024 were Kerry McCrone, Lynette Connachan, Liz Shanks and Cari McIntyre. Motions moved on behalf of the FBU were the 'Fight for 52' and the 'Forgotten Women of Afghanistan'. Both motions were unanimously carried. Kerry McCrone was elected to the STUC women's committee for 2024-25.

F4 TUC LGBT+ CONFERENCE

The TUC LGBT+ conference took place at Congress House, London on 27-28 June 2024. The FBU delegates were Maria Buck, Gemma Betts, Shelley Morgan and Pat Carberry. Matt Wrack addressed conference in his capacity as this year's TUC president. The FBU moved a motion on Safety of Rwanda (Asylum and Immigration) Bill – Campaigning to End Deportation. This sought to challenge the Conservatives' plans to deport immigrants and failed asylum seekers to Rwanda. The motion passed.

F5 TUC BLACK WORKERS' CONFERENCE

TUC Black workers' conference took place on 26-28 April 2024. The FBU delegates were Amit Malde, Kasey LeGall, and Corneil Power. The conference theme was *Here to Fight, Here to Stay*. Delegates discussed racism in the labour market, focusing on issues such as outsourcing, precarious employment, health inequalities, pay disparity, minimum service levels legislation and employment practices. FBU delegates spoke on the FBU's All Different, All Equal policy, and its importance in protecting members from bullying and harassment.

F6 NIC-ICTU BIENNIAL DELEGATE CONFERENCE

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) held its biennial delegate conference in Derry on 13-14 November 2024. The theme of the conference was *Making Work Pay – Unions Transforming Work and Workplaces*. The FBU submitted a resolution on 'Invest in our Fire and Rescue Service', which was carried unanimously. The FBU attendees comprised Ian Murray, Jim Quinn and Phil Millar.

F7 STUC CONGRESS

The Scottish Trade Union Congress (STUC) took place in Dundee on 15-17 April 2024. The theme was Scotland's workers winning together. Delegates discussed key motions on raising taxes to deliver for Scotland, just transition and green industrial strategy, new deal for workers and devolution of employment law, and Palestine.

The FBU delegates were Ben Selby, Colin Brown, Gus Sproul, Seona Hart, Simon Leroux and Scott MacRory. The FBU submitted motions demanding a ceasefire in Gaza, support for the Firefighters' Manifesto, and for ringfenced funding to address the crisis of RAAC panel construction used across the public sector. Gus Sproul was re-elected to the STUC general council.

Seona Hart, Rachel Rogers and Kerry McCrone were presented with the STUC Equalities award by First Minister Humza Yousaf for their work as part of the Scottish Women's Committee and wider work on equalities within the FBU and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

F8 TUC CYMRU

TUC Cymru held its biennial congress in Llandudno on 21-23 May 2024. The congress marked 50 years since trade unionists first met as a Wales TUC. The conference included debates on the economy, education and skills, public services, equality, green recovery and just transition.

The FBU delegates were Joanne Trafford, Beth Samuel, Terry Ledden, and Duncan Stewart-Ball. Duncan Stewart-Ball was elected to Wales TUC general council.

F9 LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

Labour Party conference was held in Liverpool on 22-25 September 2024. The FBU is affiliated to the Labour Party in England and Wales and sent four delegates: Matt Wrack, Val Hampshire, Andrew Fox-Hewitt and Steve Wright.

The FBU submitted a motion, Local government – Justice for Grenfell and the ongoing cladding crisis. Matt Wrack also addressed the conference as outgoing TUC president.

F10 LABOUR PARTY WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Labour Party annual women's conference was held in Liverpool on 21 September 2024. The FBU delegate was Val Hampshire. The FBU submitted a resolution on the horrific murder of Olympic athlete Rebecca Cheptegei.

F11 LABOUR PARTY LEADERSHIP

During 2024, the FBU maintained strong links with the Labour Party leadership at various levels. FBU officials had regular communication with shadow ministers until the election, when they became government ministers. Yvette Cooper remained shadow home secretary. Alex Norris was shadow fire minister. In addition, officials briefed MPs in the FBU parliamentary group at Westminster.

FBU officials participated in meetings of the Trade Union and Labour Party Liaison Organisation (TULO), alongside the 11 other trade unions affiliated to the party. Ian Murray was elected to serve on the Labour Party's National Executive Committee (NEC).

F12 PARTY CONFERENCES

During the year, FBU officials maintained links with a range of political parties to influence their fire and rescue service policies. This generally involved attending online and virtual meetings and events.

FBU members in Northern Ireland engaged with the five major political parties represented in the Northern Ireland Assembly: the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), Sinn Féin, the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) and the Alliance Party.

FBU officials also engaged with the Scottish Labour Party, Scottish National Party (SNP) and Scottish Green Party conferences to lobby politicians about matters concerning the Scottish government.

F13 EPSU FIREFIGHTERS' NETWORK

On 2-3 December, EPSU's Firefighters Network met in London at the TUC Congress House, hosted by the FBU. Almost 40 representatives from 14 European countries participated in the two-day event. The meeting agreed a road map to continue work on occupational health and safety at work, with the focus on firefighters' PPE, training, and trade union involvement. Other key topics included cancer prevention, PFAS exposure, working time, volunteer and/or retained firefighters, and biological hazards - an area currently under discussion at the ILO.

Speakers included Riccardo la Torre (FBU), Sébastien Delavoux (CGT-Pompiers, France), Anna Stec (University of Central Lancashire), Laura Morrison (Thompsons Solicitors), Daria Cibrario (PSI), Alex Forrest (former-IAFF, Canada) and Matt Wrack (FBU).

The Network agreed on a day of action in Brussels and adopting a motion of solidarity with Polish firefighters. The event ended with a visit to the Soho Fire Station in London.

F14 INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

The FBU has a longstanding tradition of international solidarity, maintaining strong links with firefighters across the globe and support for global labour movement campaigns. The FBU has regular correspondence with firefighter unions around the world. The union's international committee oversees these relations. The FBU participates in the European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU) firefighters' network, which includes most firefighter unions across Europe.

F15 AFFILIATIONS

During the year the FBU was affiliated to the following organisations:

LABOUR MOVEMENT ORGANISATIONS

Campaign for Labour Party Democracy (CLPD)	Momentum
Don't Leave, Organise (DLO)	Public Services International (PSI)
European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU)	Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC)
Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU)	Trade Union and Labour Party Organisation (TULO)
Labour Party	Trade Union Co-ordinating Group (TUCG)
Labour Representation Committee (LRC)	Trades Union Congress (TUC)
Labour Research Department (LRD)	Wales Trades Union Congress (WTUC)

FIRE ORGANISATIONS

Fire Protection Association (FPA)	The Firefighters Memorial Trust
Fire Sector Federation (FSF)	National Fire Sprinkler Network

NATIONAL CAMPAIGNS

Abortion Rights	Maternity Action
British Pensioners and Trade Union Action Association	Marx Memorial Library
Campaign against Climate Change	National Assembly of Women
Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND)	National Pensioners Convention
Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom	National Shop Stewards Network
Campaign for Trade Union Freedom	People's Assembly
Comprehensive Future	Protect our NHS
Defend Council Housing	Shrewsbury 24 campaign
End Child Poverty	Stand Up to Racism
Enough is Enough	Stop the War Coalition
Fuel Poverty Action	Strike Map
Institute of Employment Rights (IER)	Trade Union Friends of Searchlight
International Brigade Memorial Trust	Truth About Zane (TAZ) campaign
Justice for Grenfell	Unite Against Fascism
Liberty	Woodcraft Folk
Local Government Information Unit (LGIU)	Working Class Movement Library

INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGNS

Action for Southern Africa (ACTSA)	International Centre for Trade Union Rights (ICTUR)
Amnesty International	Justice for Colombia
Burma Campaign UK	Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign
Campaign for Human Rights in the Philippines	Palestine Solidarity Campaign
Committee for the Defence of Iranian People's Rights (CODIR)	Trade Unions for Energy Democracy (TUED)
Cuba Solidarity Campaign	Trade Union Friends of Bhopal
Greece Solidarity Campaign	Venezuela Solidarity Campaign
Hands off Venezuela	War on Want

SECTION G

EDUCATION

61 INTRODUCTION

The executive council recognises the importance of trade union education, and in 2024 supported a comprehensive offer available to officials and members throughout the union.

62 FBU TRADE UNION EDUCATION STRATEGY AND PROGRAMME

The ambition of the FBU trade union education programme was to enable every official at all levels to:

- develop the strength and capacity of the FBU to make a difference to the lived reality of members, and
- support the union's work in the context of the wider trade union movement and in defence of the fire and rescue service.

The purpose of the education programme is to ensure that every official can access the learning, development and confidence required to effectively deliver their elected role.

The FBU pathway approach to learning continued, featuring the introductory offer, the progression programme, and health, safety and welfare education, as well as bespoke and specialist events.

63 PARTICIPATION IN FBU TRADE UNION EDUCATION IN 2024

A total of 530 places were filled on the trade union education programme in 2024:

- 356 individual members/officials participated in the programme
- Of these 356 individuals, 21% were women
- Of these 356 individuals, 6% were B&EMM
- Of these 356 individuals, 44% were under 40 years old.

These figures include 30 residential courses and are excluding one-day events and the equality section schools. The Phoenix membership system does not currently enable members to identify as LGBT+ so data is not available regarding LGBT+ members' participation in FBU education.

64 INTRODUCTORY OFFER FOR BRANCH, SECTION AND NEW BRIGADE OFFICIALS

The *Introductory Branch Officials* course ran eight times in the year and was well-attended throughout by a total of 141 participants. The course took place in Eastbourne, Aberdeen, Blackpool, Leicestershire, Brighton, Wortley Hall, Bedfordshire and Belfast. Courses were oversubscribed and many branch and section officials attending reported that they had been motivated to become more involved in the union as a result of the 2023 pay dispute, the mentorship of longstanding FBU officials, and the wider campaigning work of the union. The course continues to be rooted in trade union values and principles, and to give all new officials a rounded introduction to their role, the union and the wider movement.

The *Representing Members* course was attended by 70 participants across four courses during the year, building the team of accredited reps providing support for members involved in workplace procedures in all regions of the union.

The introductory programme also included two *Mental Health for Trade Unionists* courses, recognising this as an ongoing priority for members.

65 EQUALITY SECTION SCHOOLS

FBU education supported the planning, design and delivery of annual schools for all three equality sections. Each school was well attended, had a varied programme, and was welcomed by members of the section.

66 FAIRNESS AT WORK EDUCATION

Fairness at work education was offered, as well as support for the three equality section schools.

A *Grievance and Fairness at Work* course took place in April and 20 reps attended.

A one-day event on *Recognising and Challenging Antisemitism* also took place, facilitated by Na'amod: British Jews against Israeli Occupation, who had contributed to National School in 2023.

The *All Different All Equal* course took place in June with 15 officials attending. This was in response to demand from regions, but has been limited due to the ongoing review of the policy itself.

In 2025 the FBU fairness at work education offer will be reviewed by the new FBU equalities officer, Nina Reece, who joined the education team in November and brings excellence from the higher education, third sector and trade union policy spheres.

67 HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE EDUCATION

Introduction to Health, Safety and Welfare at Work courses took place on four occasions in 2024 ensuring that new safety reps understand their rights and entitlements as well as the responsibilities on employers in regard to health and safety, and can conduct inspections of the workplace.

The pathway was extended through two *Health, Safety and Welfare – Development* courses which build safety reps' skills, knowledge and confidence in bargaining around health and safety issues in joint committees, and organises members to be more involved in collective responses to health and safety concerns.

The fully revised *Serious Accident Investigation* course took place in May. The course introduced the reworked FBU guidance on SAs, practising use of the key tools and encouraging a systematic approach that asks the questions that only FBU officials will bring to the aftermath of a serious incident. Participants welcomed the opportunity to work through a scenario which was presented as realistically as possible, and feedback was excellent. The course was timed to recognise International Workers' Memorial Day, May Day and Firefighters' Memorial Day, and will take place at the same time again in 2025.

68 DYSLEXIA AND NEURODIVERSITY

The education programme continued to offer knowledge and skills development opportunities for members and officials interested and engaged in issues related to neurodiversity.

The *Dyslexia and Neurodiversity in the Workplace* residential course ran in March with 23 participants from nine regions.

The union published its *Neurodiversity in the Workplace* guidance document this year. It was written in collaboration with neurodivergent members as a practical resource to support officials in representing and advocating for neurodivergent members.

On 20 March, the union ran its first ever *Disabled and Neurodivergent Members' Forum*. More than 30 members from across the UK came together to share their experiences and to start organising collectively for workplaces that are more inclusive.

The union has maintained its focus on accessibility by updating and improving education resources according to the learning needs of participants. FBU education continued to administer and provide guidance on the QuickScan screening tool, which remains available to all members, as well as offering bespoke advice and support to reps and officials on an ad hoc basis.

69 PROGRESSION EDUCATION FOR BRIGADE, AREA, SECTION, AND REGIONAL OFFICIALS

Progression education was offered through FBU courses and longer courses offered by the TUC.

An *Organisers' School* took place in October in Wortley Hall which explored the latest and best practice in organising, including communication action networks and worker-to-worker organising. The programme included guest speakers Gawain Little, author and general secretary of the General Federation of Trade Unions, and Finn Morrow, one of the Unite organisers of a significant dispute in the transport sector. It also included a workshop on structured organising conversations and a Phoenix membership system surgery with Anna Hernes of the membership team.

The school was facilitated by Matt Partridge who joined the education team as a full-time FBU organiser, bringing fifteen years' experience in organising practice and theory developed in the UK and internationally.

In response to escalating legal costs and requests for support from the national officer, a new course *Employment Law in Practice* was developed to build regional officials' knowledge, skills and confidence in monitoring, evaluating, supporting and rejecting legal assistance applications. The programme included the limitations of the law, discrimination and dismissal law, disability discrimination, time limits and early conciliation, assessment of merits, and communication with members regarding decisions about their case. The course was well received and will in future be available to brigade and area officials.

The progression pathway in 2024 also included *Conference Matters*, *Pensions – Supporting Members with Ill-Health Retirement*, and the *Serious Accident Investigation* and *All Different All Equal* courses.

610 NATIONAL SCHOOL

National School took place in November with a cohort of 29 activists from across the regions and sections of the union. Programme highlights included:

- A formal address and welcome from the general secretary
- A keynote speaker session with Gary Younge, journalist and academic, on race and class
- A photography talk and exhibition with legendary labour movement photographer John Harris acknowledging the 40th anniversary of the Miners' Strike 1984-85
- A series of debates in which participants challenged each other on key strategic questions relating to the future of the fire and rescue service
- A discussion considering ambitions and expectations of the new Labour government and a meeting with guest Richard Burgon MP
- A session highlighting the international significance of the genocide in Palestine, including an address from HE Ambassador Husam S. Zomlot, the Head of the Palestinian Mission to the United Kingdom, and guest speakers Taj Ali, historian and journalist, and Ben Jamal, director of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign.
- A session with Corporate Watch, researching private interest and corporate connections in the fire and rescue service, including Babcock International, MSA Safety Inc. and the NFCC.

These plenary sessions were intertwined with classroom discussions and the *Making Change* project which gives school participants opportunity in small groups to advocate for change on an issue that is important to them.

Earlier in the year the second part of *National School 2023* took place in Brighton. The first day caught up with participants to find out what had been their finest moments since the November school, followed by an activity looking at the threats and opportunities facing the FBU and a discussion session with the general secretary. The remainder of the school was an exploration of political economy delivered in partnership with Stiofán Ó Nualláin from the anti-sectarian workers' co-operative Trademark Belfast. Discussions included the emergence of neoliberalism and the background to austerity, the reasons for and the impact of the 2008 global financial crash, the reality of the production and distribution of the world's wealth, and what potential alternatives might look like. Feedback and evaluations were outstanding and participants were encouraged to identify officials who would benefit from attending *National School* in November 2024.

National School remains the key development opportunity for reps and activists in the union. It is the culmination of the annual education calendar and will be rewritten for 2025 to address the contemporary industrial and political context.

611 TUC EDUCATION AND PUBLIC FUNDING FOR TRADE UNION EDUCATION

The TUC education programme in England continued to be under significant pressure in 2024. TUC education is predominantly delivered by trade union education tutors via TUC education centres in further education colleges. Courses are externally accredited and this allows the colleges to draw down limited public funding in recognition of the public good that trained and educated reps in all unions do. Due to escalating cuts to the funding available and increasingly prohibitive restrictions on learners who can be funded, there are now far fewer colleges offering trade union education than at any point since this system first began. In recent years this has significantly impacted on the availability of in-person certificate and diploma courses available to FBU officials.

The union continues to rely on our very successful partnership with the College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London (CONEL) for external accreditation and tutors for some of the FBU programme of bespoke short courses. The recruitment of the FBU organiser and FBU equalities officer will support the sustainability of the education programme in the face of these ongoing challenges by increasing the union's capacity to deliver high quality education in-house. The TUC has been conducting a review of its education offer throughout 2023 and 2024 but no strategic solutions to this issue have emerged.

This year the FBU Education programme was supported by tutors Janine Booth, Mike Kidd, Helen Nolan, Dave Smith, Jane Stevenson and Steve White, as well as the FBU head of education.

612 UNION LEARNING FUND

The 25th anniversary of the Wales Union Learning Fund (WULF) in 2024 marked a significant milestone in supporting workers' access to education and skills development. There has been a firm commitment by the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership, Jack Sargeant, with the programme set to build on its achievements.

The FBU has received a new three-year round of funding aimed at enhancing learning opportunities for firefighters and control staff. This funding will particularly address the challenges faced by part-time workers within the fire service by providing individualised learning and skills support. The project will not only focus on delivering certified qualifications and essential skills but will also emphasise improving workforce wellbeing, recognising the importance of both professional development and mental health for employees.

With the continued support and funding from Scottish Government, Region 1 continue to offer lifelong union learning opportunities. We are now coming to the end of our third project and are optimistically awaiting confirmation for the successful funding application for Project 4 in 2025-27.

Since Region 1 again became part of the Union Lifelong Learning Projects in 2019, we have seen around 1,500 learners participate in a number of different, fully funded courses, this includes 600 achieving accredited qualifications.

Being part of this project has allowed access to various sources of additional funding. The Flexible Working Development Fund has funded 6 Region 1 FBU reps to undertake NEBOSH qualifications.

Being part of the STUC Lifelong Learning Partnership also provides many opportunities for fully funded courses from organisations like the Open University, providing access to Microcredential courses, which have various accreditation levels: 12 learners within our region have achieved these qualifications.

613 REGIONAL EDUCATION AND LEARNING ORGANISERS (RELOS)

Once again the national team of RELOs has been key to the success of the FBU trade union education programme. They have sought to make sure that the programme meets the needs of the union as a whole and have made suggestions and contributions that have improved the education offer. They have also encouraged brigades and areas to appoint education and learning organisers, which has enriched the team alongside the section education leads.

SECTION H

EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS AT WORK

H1 INTRODUCTION

During 2024, the FBU made some important breakthroughs for tackling discrimination, harassment and other unacceptable behaviours. This included work through the National Joint Council (NJC), the inclusion of maternity pay as part of the 2024 pay settlement, further work on neurodiversity and disability, and interventions at parliamentary committees on culture reviews.

The FBU's equality sections and officials organised regular meetings of representatives from across the UK, participated in the executive council's equalities sub-committee and at the NJC's Inclusive Fire Service Group (IFSG). They also took part in wider labour movement and other campaigns to fight for equality.

H2 INCLUSIVE FIRE SERVICE GROUP (IFSG)

In March 2024, the NJC reaffirmed its commitment to support and promote the development of positive culture and inclusive behaviours in the fire and rescue service, through the Inclusive Fire Service Group (IFSG). The IFSG includes representatives from the FBU (including our sections), as well as fire employers and the NFCC (2024HOC0161BS).

The IFSG published its revised improvement strategies, which were publicised by the FBU and fire employers' bodies. The IFSG urged all fire and rescue services to embed all aspects of these improvement strategies within their service (circular NJC/2/24).

H3 B&EMM SECTION REPORT

In October, the FBU's Black and ethnic minority members' (B&EMM) section school marked its 30th anniversary with a special celebration at Wortley Hall. It was an honour to welcome founding members, who shared their experiences from the section's inception to their journeys as activists. Their powerful insights served as a reminder of why B&EMM was established. The event was brought to life with a vibrant display of flags representing the union's diverse membership, the sounds of a steel pan band, and the flavours of Caribbean cuisine – a true celebration of culture and history.

A significant moment of the event was the unveiling of the memorial bench for Leila Asoko, a space where B&EMM can now reflect on her life and contributions. The union also proudly presented a portrait of George Arthur Roberts, the first Black firefighter. This portrait will be displayed for one year in the FBU bar.

Progress continues on the racism report, ensuring that the lived experiences of our members are acknowledged and addressed. With the appointment of a new equalities officer, the union has identified the right person to conduct the survey – an essential step in tackling systemic issues.

Amit Malde resigned as B&EMM national secretary after three and a half years of dedicated service. Having stepped in during a crucial time in 2021, Amit provided leadership when the section needed it most.

FBU delegates Amit Malde, Kasey LeGall and Corneil Power attended the TUC Black Workers' Conference (26-28 April), where they spoke on the FBU's unique All Different, All Equal policy and its importance in protecting members from bullying and harassment.

Regions across the country took part in Black History Month, supported women's and LGBT+ initiatives, and sent equipment to Jamaica.

The B&EMM national committee met on four occasions:

- 5 March – London
- 20 June – Leicestershire
- 3 September – London
- 10-11 December, AGM – Belfast.

A full list of B&EMM regional representatives is in Section L. Reports of B&EMM participation at labour movement conferences is in Section F.

H4 LGBT+ SECTION REPORT

The FBU's LGBT+ committee had a busy year dealing with various culture reviews within the fire and rescue sector. Issues such as language, homophobia and, in particular, a rise in transphobia and online transphobic hate were common trends in what the committee have been facing.

LGBT+ 2024 school took place 7-9 February in Glasgow and was fully subscribed. The 2025 school in Cardiff was planned. Again, all places were filled.

The committee met throughout the year since conference 2024. We sent a delegation to the TUC LGBT+ conference and were able to attend and support several Pride events including London and Bristol Pride 2024.

Pat Carberry retired after making an outstanding contribution to the LGBT+ section, the FBU and the wider labour movement.

The LGBT+ Committee met on the following dates:

- 29 February-1 March, AGM – London
- 12-13 July – Bristol
- 19-20 September – Lincoln
- 4-6 December – Sheffield, Wortley Hall.

A list of LGBT+ regional reps is found in Section L. Reports of LGBT+ participation at labour movement conferences is in Section F.

H5 WOMEN'S SECTION REPORT

The FBU's National Women's Committee (NWC) celebrated their 25th anniversary in 2024, having been established in 1999.

The NWC continued to represent women members during the year. Recurring issues affecting women within the fire and rescue service are sexual harassment, gender-based bullying, sexual assault, maternity discrimination, misogyny, menopause, flexible working, PPE and inadequate facilities.

The NJC pay agreement that came into effect on 1 July contained an improvement to the Grey Book occupational maternity provision: 26 weeks at full pay (inclusive of all allowances and CPD), followed by 13 weeks at statutory maternity pay. This was seen as a huge step forward for the FBU's maternity campaign 'Fight for 52', but the work still continues.

National Women's School took place on 22-24 March at Wortley Hall, Sheffield. The weekend was oversubscribed and well received by those that attended. The school included sessions delivered by Laura Bates on 'The everyday sexism project' and Nikki Pound, TUC women's policy officer. We delivered workshops on the impact of the NWC, sexual harassment, getting more involved, challenging behaviours and more. The Helen Harrison memorial plenary continued, with Denise Christie discussing the work of the NWC through the years.

Kerry McCrone, Seona Hart and Rachel Rogers won the STUC Equality award, which was presented by the First Minister at STUC Congress on 16 April 2024.

The NWC met on four occasions during the year:

- 21 February – London
- 11 July – Bournemouth
- 3 October – London
- 4-5 December, AGM – Cardiff.

A list of NWC regional reps is found in Section L. Reports of the NWC participation at Women's Trade Unions conferences is in Section F.

H6 DISABLED AND NEURODIVERGENT MEMBERS

In March 2024, the FBU organised a disabled and neurodivergent members' forum (2024HOC0125BS). On 20 March, more than 30 members from across the UK came together to share their experiences and to start organising collectively for workplaces that are more inclusive.

The FBU published the *Neurodiversity in the Workplace* guidance document. It was written in collaboration with neurodivergent members as a practical resource to support officials in representing and advocating for neurodivergent members.

In April, the FBU circulated details of the Quickscreen screening tool, accredited by the British Dyslexia Association, to help identify indicators of dyslexia, dyspraxia and dyscalculia (2024HOC0174BS).

In November, the FBU announced that a second disabled and neurodivergent members' forum would be held in January the following year (2024HOC0418BS).

H7 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL EQUALITIES SUB-COMMITTEE

During 2024, the equalities sub-committee met to consider the FBU approach to all equalities matters. The sub-committee was made up of the assistant general secretary, three executive council members, regional and sectional secretaries and staff. It held meetings on:

- 23 January
- 23 April
- 5 September

The committee discussed national standards, White Ribbon, the sexual harassment report, the review of All Different All Equal, London Culture Review, IFSG, Grenfell equality impact, NFCC culture work and the rapid relief team. FBU sections and forums gave reports. It reviewed the FBU's Equality Matters campaign.

H8 FIGHT FOR 52 CAMPAIGN

In May 2024, the NJC pay agreement was confirmed after the consultative ballot of FBU members – see Section A (2024HOC0218MW).

The agreement included extending occupational maternity pay to 26 weeks at full pay, followed by statutory maternity pay (SMP, where eligible) for 13 weeks (NJC/3/24). This amended the Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book) Part D – Maternity, childcare and dependency section.

In July, the FBU circulated the revised wording (2024HOC0282BS). It stated:

Maternity pay

19. *An employee who has less than a year's continuous local government service at the beginning of the eleventh week before the EWC shall receive their entitlement to Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP).*
20. *An employee who has completed at least a year's continuous local government service at the eleventh week before the EWC shall be entitled to the following:*
 - (1) *For the first six weeks of absence, full pay offset against SMP, or Maternity Allowance (MA) for employees not eligible for SMP.*
 - (2)(a) *Where she has declared an intention to return to work, a further twenty weeks at full pay offset against SMP, or Maternity Allowance (MA) for employees not eligible for SMP. Then, SMP (if eligible) for the subsequent thirteen weeks.*
 - (b) *Where she does not intend to return to work, SMP (where eligible) for the subsequent thirty three weeks (following on from the provision set out in 20(1)).*
 - (3) *Payments under (2)(a) shall be on the understanding that the employee shall return to work for at least three months, which may be varied by the fire and rescue authority on good cause being shown. In the event of her not returning to work, the fire and rescue authority may require her to refund all or part of the payments made. Payments made to the employee by way of SMP are not refundable.*

H9 HOME AFFAIRS COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO CULTURE

During 2024, the Home Affairs Select Committee at Westminster held a short inquiry into culture in fire and rescue services. This included the culture reviews in London, and in Dorset and Wiltshire. On 5 March, Matt Wrack gave testimony to the committee on behalf of the FBU. The committee did not produce a final report, due to the general election.

H10 SENEDD INQUIRY INTO CULTURE

During 2024, the Equality and Social Justice Committee of the Senedd carried out a review of the fire and rescue services in Wales. Equalities featured prominently after media reports about inappropriate behaviour in fire and rescue services in Wales. On 4 March, Matt Wrack and Cerith Griffiths gave testimony to the committee on behalf of the FBU.

H12 ADAE REPRESENTATION REQUESTS

The table shows the number of ADAE requests for representation received by regional secretaries.

2024	Requests for representation	Granted	Not Granted	Appeals	Appeals Rejected	Appeals Upheld
Region 1	6	3	2	2	2	
Region 2	0					
Region 3	7	2	1	1	1	
Region 4	6	2	1	1	1	
Region 5	3	1				
Region 6	13	9				
Region 7	6		2	1	1	
Region 8	3	1	2	2		
Region 9	8	2	1	1	1	
Region 10	7	3	1	1		1
Region 11	1	1				
Region 12	5	5				
Region 13	6	2	1			

- Region 1 – Within the figures are three ADAEs that began in 2023 but concluded in 2024 (two had representation granted and one had representation withdrawn). Additionally, the sixth case started in the last two weeks of 2024 and is still ongoing
- Region 3 – Of 7 requests received, 4 no longer required representation prior to conclusion of ADAE investigation
- Region 4 – 2 resigned from service, 1 ongoing
- Region 5 – 2 cases concluded early, 1 member retired, 1 no case to answer by service
- Region 6 – 4 investigations ongoing
- Region 7 – 3 applications not concluded due to 2 dismissals prior to conclusion and 1 member leaving the union during ADAE process. 1 application ongoing and continues into 2025
- Region 8 – 2 appeal hearings pending
- Region 9 – 3 dropped by service before completion, 2 outstanding
- Region 12 – 1 saw the entire process through to completion. The remaining four had charges dropped or no further action, which resulted in the ADAE investigations ceasing. One applied for representation in November 2023, had representation withdrawn in January 2024 and then appealed the decision. This was heard by the Representation Appeals Committee who upheld the Regional Committee’s decision and withdrew representation
- Region 13 – A total of 6 requests, 2 were granted and 1 was not granted. 1 member left service during the investigation, so the ADAE was never concluded. 2 are still ongoing as they only started in late December 2024

SECTION I

ACCIDENT AND INJURY FUND (AIF)

11 INTRODUCTION

The management committee of the Accident and Injury Fund (AIF) is chaired by the vice-president and administered by a national officer.

In 2024, executive council members on the committee were:

Steve Wright

Colin Brown

Andrew Fox-Hewitt

Val Hampshire

Pete Smith

Mark Rowe was secretary.

On joining the union, all members should be urged by brigade and branch officials to become a member of the AIF, enabling them to access the potential benefits of the fund. Members of the fund should also be encouraged to keep their nominations for benefits up to date.

Officials at brigade and branch level should also ensure that members adhere to the rules of the fund, with particular attention to the time limits required for submitting claims.

Accident and Injury Fund									
Summary for the year ended 31 December 2024									
Region	Temporary disablement		Permanent disablement	Death of member	Ex-gratia	Death of dependant	Total number of payments	Total amount	
	On duty	Off duty							
1	No. of payments	9		10		1	20	£133,559.97	
	Amount paid	£6,255.76		£120,059.12		£7,245.09			
2	No. of payments	83	23	3		1	110	£215,293.14	
	Amount paid	£103,357.08	£28,687.15	£75,713.91		£7,535.00			
3	No. of payments		5	2		2	9	£102,974.92	
	Amount paid		£4,583.56	£83,611.27		£14,780.09			
4	No. of payments	3		1		1	5	£29,167.12	
	Amount paid	£3,809.31		£18,112.72		£7,245.09			
5	No. of payments	12		5		1	18	£148,195.49	
	Amount paid	£13,647.07		£127,303.33		£7,245.09			
6	No. of payments			6		2	8	£71,005.53	
	Amount paid			£56,225.44		£14,780.09			
7	No. of payments	5		2	1	1	9	£31,856.66	
	Amount paid	£4,611.57		£10,000.00	£10,000.00	£7,245.09			
8	No. of payments	3	24	3	1	1	32	£113,898.57	
	Amount paid	£1,867.57	£20,844.85	£81,941.06	£2,000.00	£7,245.09			
9	No. of payments		8	3		2	13	£150,168.43	
	Amount paid		£7,961.97	£127,136.46		£15,070.00			
10	No. of payments	12		1	1	1	26	£360,989.53	
	Amount paid	£12,241.19		£18,837.5	£15,000.00	£7,245.09			
11	No. of payments	6		1			9	£99,654.87	
	Amount paid	£5,486.31		£18,112.72					
12	No. of payments					1	3	£43,470.53	
	Amount paid					£7,245.09			
13	No. of payments	5		1			8	£77,091.15	
	Amount paid	£8,262.81		£18,112.72					
TOTAL NO. OF PAYMENTS		138	60	4	51	3	270		
Total amount		£159,538.67	£62,077.53	£73,175.66	£1,152,653.24	£27,000.00		£1,577,325.91	

SECTION J

LEGAL REPORT

J1 INTRODUCTION

Thompsons provides various legal services to support FBU members and their families who are injured at work or in their personal lives, or face unfair treatment in the workplace. This report highlights some of these cases, excluding those protected by anonymity orders imposed by the High Court to protect the member.

While all personal injuries are devastating, some are life changing. One example of this type of work includes an FBU member who was seriously injured while cycling when a motorist failed to yield at a roundabout. The traumatic brain injury he suffered has had a profound and devastating impact on their life.

In this case, as in others, the FBU secured a substantial settlement to ensure the member could access the care and support necessary to manage their injuries and rebuild their lives. Thompsons are unable to provide details of these claims in this report, although they are high-value settlements, which often run into millions of pounds for FBU members.

The following table gives an overview of the cases Thompsons has taken on behalf of FBU members and the compensation secured throughout 2024.

Type of case	Members	Compensation received by members
Asbestos	2	£283,479
Clinical negligence	3	£422,000
Employment rights	12	£219,775
Non-asbestos diseases	2	£14,635
Other personal injury	11	£709,172
Road traffic accidents	66	£2,057,923
Settlement agreements	5	£75,319
Stress	1	£70,000
Workplace accidents	149	£16,415,038
Total	251	£20,267,341

J2 INQUIRIES

Grenfell Tower Inquiry – Phase 2 and final report

The FBU received valuable support from Thompsons Solicitors during the Grenfell Tower public inquiry. The FBU was a core participant from the earliest stages. Throughout Phase 1, the union and its solicitors ensured that individual firefighters were shielded from criticism, focusing instead on systemic failures.

The inquiry involved managing over 300,000 documents, collaborating with counsel on written and oral submissions, attending years of hearings, and drafting witness statements for the FBU and individual firefighters on sensitive issues. The Phase 1 report, published in October 2019, confirmed systemic failings rather than individual errors.

Phase 2 of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry concluded in November 2022, with core participants delivering closing statements. The FBU highlighted the shocking evidence of a culture of minimal compliance by contractors, manufacturers, and regulators, facilitated by decades of political decisions prioritising commercial interests and profit over public safety.

The FBU particularly criticised government policies of deregulation, privatisation and austerity, creating conditions for such catastrophic failures. The evidence also demonstrated that any shortcomings on the night of the fire were due to inadequate procedures and training provided by the London Fire Brigade (LFB), not individual firefighters.

The Phase 2 report published in September 2024 confirmed many of the FBU's concerns. It exposed decades of regulatory failure, particularly under the Cameron government's agenda to cut "red tape," and criticised the privatisation of the BRE, which compromised safety standards in the building industry. The chair found that construction companies engaged in "systematic dishonesty" to maximise profit, leading to the devastating safety failings at Grenfell Tower.

The inquiry closed formally in early 2025, and its records, including all disclosed evidence, will be published on The National Archives Discovery Platform.

UK Covid-19 Inquiry

Thompsons represents the Trades Union Congress (TUC) in the UK Covid-19 inquiry. The role included securing TUC core participant status across multiple modules and influencing the inquiry's terms of reference.

TUC submissions have ensured that austerity was examined in Module 1, focusing on pre-pandemic preparedness. In Module 2, key issues such as financial support for self-isolation, statutory sick pay, workplace safety, and educational decision-making were highlighted. For Module 3, critical concerns about healthcare staffing, infection prevention, structural racism in the NHS, and the unequal impact of the pandemic on black and minority ethnic healthcare workers were raised.

Thompsons reviewed significant evidence, drafted witness statements, and prepared questions for high-profile witnesses, including David Cameron, Boris Johnson and Rishi Sunak. By securing permissions for TUC counsel to question these individuals in live hearings, workers' voices and concerns were at the forefront. During 2024, Thompsons continued to ensure that the TUC maintained its significant presence throughout the inquiry.

J3 EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS

McCloud Pension Litigation

Thompsons Solicitors represent over 9,000 FBU members in claims arising from the discriminatory transitional arrangements introduced in 2015. These arrangements required firefighters born on or after 2 April 1971 to leave their legacy pension schemes and join the 2015 Firefighters' Pension Scheme, resulting in age discrimination.

Firefighters lodged claims between 2015 and 2024, and in autumn 2024, statutory regulations were introduced to address financial losses caused by these arrangements following successful litigation. Earlier this year, Thompsons secured settlements for over 3,000 firefighters who filed claims in 2015, including compensation for injury to feelings. This represented a significant breakthrough for both the union and its members. Many claims from this first wave remain under negotiation, with further settlement agreements expected to address the remaining cases.

Discussions with the Government Legal Department are ongoing regarding claims lodged after 2015, which include members with tapered protection. This process involves detailed submissions and evidence from sample members to define settlement parameters. While progress has been made, recent delays have arisen due to a change in government. The union has requested that cases remain stayed to allow time for an agreement, although this position will be subject to ongoing review.

This case remains a significant example of the collective fight for justice, ensuring firefighters receive fair treatment and compensation for the impacts of these transitional arrangements.

Harassment and racism claim against employer

Thompsons were instructed close to the six-year limitation period to pursue a claim under the Protection from Harassment Act for the racism endured by an FBU member during their career with the fire service. Following initial instructions, court proceedings were issued, and medical evidence was obtained from a psychiatrist.

In its defence, the employer denied liability, disputing the alleged acts and claiming that any incidents were not sufficiently connected to their employee's official duties to establish vicarious liability. Despite this, the union pushed forward, gathering further evidence and agreeing to a stay of proceedings to allow the member to complete a 12-month counselling programme, as recommended by the psychiatrist. Once treatment concluded, a follow-up psychiatric report was planned.

Simultaneously, Thompsons' Employment Rights Team brought an Employment Tribunal claim on behalf of the member, which also met with the employer's full denial of liability. The tribunal hearing was scheduled for three weeks, during which settlement negotiations took place at the member's request to resolve both claims together.

A settlement of £80,000 was agreed, covering both claims. While the employer made no formal admission of liability, this settlement recognises the suffering and racism the member endured throughout their career. This resolution has allowed them to close this chapter and move forward with their life.

Unfair dismissal claim

Thompsons were instructed to pursue claims for wages, disability discrimination, trade union detriment, and unfair dismissal on behalf of an FBU member.

The member, a union representative with several health conditions, was dismissed by their employer for allegedly failing to meet fitness standards. At the time of the dismissal, Occupational Health had provided a medical report recommending a fitness programme to support the member in achieving the required standards.

The claim was fiercely contested. On the first day of the tribunal hearing, Thompsons applied to strike out the respondent's defence after it emerged that they had sent a letter to one of the member's witnesses shortly before the hearing. The letter warned the witness about breaching a settlement agreement by providing evidence deemed "derogatory." While the defence was not struck out, the tribunal noted that the timing of the letter reflected poorly on the respondent.

The tribunal found that the member had properly engaged with the fitness programme and was progressing well until a chest infection interrupted their efforts. The tribunal also recognised that the member had been placed in a full-time union role until January 2021.

Ultimately, the tribunal concluded that the member had been unfairly dismissed. The dismissal was deemed unfair due to the employer's failure to consider up-to-date medical evidence, conduct a reasonable investigation, or explore alternatives to dismissal. However, the tribunal did not find evidence of disability discrimination or trade union detriment.

At the remedy hearing in 2024, the member was awarded £63,129.36, comprising a basic award of £13,719.00, and a compensatory award of £49,410.36, the maximum available under the Employment Rights Act 1996.

This case demonstrates the importance of employers following fair procedures and considering all relevant evidence before making significant employment decisions.

J4 PERSONAL INJURY AT WORK

Grenfell Tower fire – High Court settlement

As reported in the previous annual report, Thompsons helped the union secure a landmark settlement for 114 FBU members involved in the Grenfell Tower tragedy, including 111 firefighters and three control room officers. Members suffered a combination of physical and psychiatric injuries, with investigations also conducted into potential future respiratory and other health conditions caused by smoke inhalation.

Legal proceedings were issued in the High Court against 11 defendants, including the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Arconic, Celotex, Rydon and the London Fire Commissioner. Following a stay for mediation, an intensive negotiation process culminated on 10 November 2023 with a global settlement, providing vital compensation for those profoundly affected by this disaster. During 2024, this compensation was delivered to the affected members.

Injury after vehicle rolls on mountain path

An FBU member sustained multiple injuries as a rear-seat passenger in an off-road Pinzgauer appliance that overturned while navigating a mountain path, rolling into a gully. The member suffered soft tissue injuries to the neck, left shoulder, lower back and right wrist. While lower back symptoms resolved within months, they continued to experience neck and left shoulder pain, reduced function in their left arm, and aggravation of a pre-existing right elbow condition due to compensatory overuse.

The defendants denied liability throughout the claim. Medical evidence from a consultant orthopaedic surgeon and a consultant in neuro-rehabilitation medicine supported the member's case. Despite the ongoing denial of liability, the claim progressed to ensure the member's injuries and losses were addressed.

Burn injuries due to inadequate PPE

A firefighter sustained burn injuries while attending a fire. The injuries occurred because the member was wearing an older type of temporary personal protective equipment (PPE), as an external provider was cleaning his usual PPE. The heat penetrated the PPE, causing burns to the left arm, forearm, hand, thigh, and knee. The injuries resolved within two months without permanent scarring, although the firefighter experienced short-term situational anxiety.

The defendant accepted negligence, and the claim was settled pre-issue for £3,200 following the submission of medical evidence and associated losses.

Hose-related injury at roadshow

During a roadshow at a fire station, a colleague accidentally activated a pressurised hose, which struck the member's right ankle, causing injury. While primary liability was accepted, the defendant proposed 25% contributory negligence. Thompsons argued this was unreasonable as no safety briefing was provided, full kit was not mandated, and others were not wearing it. After court proceedings, the claim settled for £3,250.

Back injury from breathing apparatus storage

The member sustained a back injury while placing heavy breathing apparatus into a poorly designed cradle in the crew cab of a fire appliance. Liability was denied, but we pursued the case, arguing the lack of a proper risk assessment and pointing to post-accident design modifications. The claim was settled through negotiations for £3,700.

Back injury from unmarked step

The member suffered a jarring back injury after stepping off an unmarked step. The defendant denied liability, claiming the step was not previously identified as hazardous. Thompsons countered with evidence of prior hazard reports. After initiating court proceedings, the case settled for £7,500.

Burn injury during training exercise

During a training exercise, the member, a firefighter wearing full breathing apparatus, sustained burns to their hands while exiting on their knuckles due to excessive water on the floor and insufficient instructions. The defendant denied liability and refused to negotiate, but the case proceeded to trial on 29 November 2023. The judge ruled entirely in favour of the member, awarding £11,794.69.

Training incident – acoustic shock

A firefighter attending training at a Surrey Fire and Rescue Service facility suffered permanent hearing loss, tinnitus, and depression due to acoustic shock from a sudden release of compressed air. They were not provided ear protection at the time of the incident. Following court proceedings, the member was awarded £65,000 in compensation.

Training drill – fall through hatch

During a breathing apparatus drill, the member fell through a faulty wooden hatch, landing on their back on a cylinder. They suffered bruising, back sprains, exacerbation of a pre-existing knee injury, anxiety, and flashbacks. The case was settled for £15,000.

Back injury during home visit

A firefighter sustained a back injury while lifting and manoeuvring an unconscious casualty with a colleague during a home visit. The employer denied liability, but following the issue of court proceedings, the claim settled for £5,500.

Hearing injury from hose reel check

While conducting pre-shift checks on a new fire appliance, the member suffered bilateral temple pain and muffled hearing when a build-up of air caused a loud bang in the hose reel. The defendant denied liability and failed to comply with court directions, leading to an application to strike out the defence. The claim settled shortly before the hearing for £2,000.

Fall injury during training exercise

During a breathing apparatus training session, the member fell through an unmanned hatch while navigating a dark corridor. They caught themselves with their arms but sustained injuries. The employer admitted liability, but court proceedings were necessary to achieve a satisfactory settlement. Following negotiations, the claim settled for £12,500.

J5 PERSONAL INJURY OUTSIDE OF WORK

Road traffic accident – passenger injury

The member, a rear-seat passenger, was injured when the defendant lost control of their vehicle and crossed to the wrong side of the road, causing a head-on collision. The member suffered a broken left humerus, neck and back pain, injuries to the left arm and both shoulders, and bruising and lacerations to both legs. Restricted mobility and mental trauma were also reported. Court proceedings were necessary to secure a settlement because the defendant's insurers refused to negotiate.

Promenade accident – fall and fracture

The member sustained injuries to the lateral ligamentous complex and an anterior calcaneal process fracture after tripping on a missing flagstone while running along a promenade. Liability was denied, and court proceedings were required to progress the claim to a satisfactory conclusion.

Pedestrian accident – traumatic brain injury

The member sustained a traumatic brain injury with skull fractures, reduced hearing, and a loss of smell and taste after being struck by a van at a hospital crossing. They also suffered ankle injuries and ongoing symptoms, including headaches, dizziness, and light sensitivity, but managed to return to work. An out-of-court settlement was negotiated on the member's behalf.

Road traffic accident – Postural Tachycardic Syndrome (POTS)

Following a road traffic accident, the member was diagnosed with Postural Tachycardic Syndrome (POTS), which ended their career as an operational firefighter. Liability was admitted, but extensive medical evidence was required to establish a causal link between the accident and POTS. Settlement was achieved for £450,000, reflecting the financial impact of their condition.

Tree falling incident

The member was injured when a tree fell onto their vehicle, causing rib and facial injuries as well as psychological harm. The defendants were uninsured and refused to negotiate, necessitating court proceedings. A settlement was eventually achieved after prolonged litigation.

Equipment failure – gym injury

The member suffered a concussion and a rotator cuff injury when a rowing machine in their work gym failed. Liability was admitted, but court proceedings were required to secure a fair settlement.

J6 PERSONAL INJURY TO A FAMILY MEMBER

Holiday injury leads to amputated finger for child

The young son of an FBU member sustained a severe injury during a package holiday to Tunisia booked through TUI UK Limited. While supervised by his mother, the boy placed his finger into an overflow hole in a bath, where a sharp edge caused a laceration. The injury became infected, leading to necrosis of the soft tissue and the amputation of approximately half of his left index finger (non-dominant).

Medical evidence was gathered regarding the physical injury, psychological trauma, and the resulting disability. Additional reports were obtained concerning the need for cosmetic and functional prosthetics. The case settled for £230,000, with the compensation invested in court funds until the child reaches 18.

Facial burn injury during beauty therapy course

The family member in this case sustained facial burns during a beauty therapy course when another student applied hot wax to their chin and upper lip despite their notifying the tutor of a pre-existing skin condition. The college denied liability, but after court proceedings were issued, the claim settled for £2,000.

Neck and psychological injury in vehicle collision

As a passenger in a vehicle, this family member suffered a soft tissue neck injury and psychological trauma when the vehicle was rear-ended. Liability was admitted, and a settlement of £1,500 was agreed pre-issue. As the family member was under 18, Thompsons sought and obtained court approval of the settlement.

J7 CLINICAL NEGLIGENCE

Rectal mesh injury

A young FBU member who underwent rectal mesh surgery as a minor faced debilitating pain and significant life challenges due to complications from the procedure. Despite these struggles, they bravely pursued a career in the fire and rescue service, initially working in a call centre on an adjusted shift pattern. After briefly leaving the service to explore regular hours, they returned but were forced to re-apply as a new employee, losing their previous adjusted shift pattern. They now works full shifts, including two-night shifts, and fear this may not be sustainable long-term. The impact of the alleged botched surgery continues to limit their career progression and quality of life.

The case was fully contested by the defendants, who only made offers during mediation. After extensive negotiations, a substantial settlement was achieved, reflecting the profound impact of the injuries on their life and career.

Ignored polyp leads to throat cancer

A retired firefighter passed away due to the failure to monitor and/or remove a vocal cord polyp, which developed into stage 4 throat cancer. Negotiations with the NHS Trust resulted in a settlement of £425,000 for the member's widowed spouse and dependents.

Mismanagement of ankle fracture

An FBU member's family pursued a claim against an NHS Foundation Trust for the negligent treatment of an ankle fracture, which resulted in avoidable post-traumatic arthritis, ongoing pain, swelling, stiffness, reduced mobility, and diminished quality of life. The member sadly passed away before the case concluded. Their son took over as the executor, and the claim was settled for £22,000 following negotiations, with liability admitted in full by the NHS Trust.

J8 INDUSTRIAL DISEASE

Mesothelioma claim – occupational asbestos exposure

A former firefighter tragically passed away from mesothelioma in 2021. Represented by their executors, the claim was brought against Kent County Council due to extensive asbestos exposure throughout their firefighting career. They were exposed to asbestos through various sources, including:

- Asbestos cladding in confined spaces used for drills
- Asbestos-lagged piping in service tunnels at Maidstone Training Centre
- Fires at commercial premises, farms, and aboard diesel trains where asbestos-lagged materials were present
- Pulling down ceilings and roofs containing asbestos-based materials
- Use of asbestos gloves and blankets for chimney and chip pan fires.

Despite initial delays, as the defendant indicated it would obtain engineering evidence (which was not served), court proceedings were issued. Following this, the claim was settled for £160,000. This case highlights the enduring impact of occupational asbestos exposure and the importance of pursuing justice for affected families.

SECTION K

ORGANISING AND MEMBERSHIP

K1 INTRODUCTION

During 2024, the FBU put more resources into organising, in recognition of the importance of renewing the membership and developing new officials. The union did not hold any industrial action ballots.

The FBU's trade sections continued to raise the pressing matters affecting key aspects of the membership; in control, retained, and officers.

K2 INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES

During 2024, the FBU did not ballot members in any fire and rescue service for industrial action.

K3 CSNC SECTION REPORT

During 2024, the FBU's Control Staff National Committee (CSNC) continued to offer support to members involved in discipline cases and provide information for brigade reps regarding mobilising system issues.

The CSNC were involved in briefings on pay negotiations, offering information to strengthen the union's case to reduce the pay gap, after input from the task and finish group. CSNC believe these arguments can be used to the FBU's advantage for future negotiations. CSNC officials represented members in discipline and ADAE cases.

After a transitional year, the CSNC have welcomed new reps within many regions. The committee believes this will invigorate the work it conducts, and help achieve the best for our members. The CSNC continued to hold meetings and discussions online to fit in with work-life balance, ease of time management and travel. The committee is planning more face-to-face meetings.

The CSNC held two meetings in 2024:

- 1 May
- 14 May.

A list of CSNC regional reps is found in Section L.

K4 RETAINED SECTION REPORT

The year began with the final meeting of the NJC review group, considering the pay and rewards for members working the retained duty system. The review was completed over an eight-month period, with FBU delegates from the National Retained Committee (NRC), executive council and head office. The NJC review group made a series of recommendations, including a redesign of the retaining fee, incorporating cover bandings and an overall increase in the fee. This element formed part of the 2024 pay offer and was accepted by members, coming into force in January 2025.

During 2024, the NRC held three meetings:

- 23-24 February – Derby
- 27-28 September – London
- 1-2 November, AGM – Wortley.

The committee continue to have regionally hosted business meetings, where the issues of the region are discussed, with the aim of building a stronger network of retained officials throughout the UK. Attendance at our business meetings by the elected regional reps has been good throughout the year. However, the FBU still does not have a regional retained representative from every region.

At FBU conference, NRC delegates moved resolutions on 'Public Holiday entitlement for members working the Retained Duty System' and 'Protection for Retained Duty System members who suffer an injury whilst responding to an emergency call'. A third resolution, 'Guidance on Decontamination and Welfare Facilities in the Workplace' was withdrawn to support the resolution from Shropshire on 'Health and Safety Forms'.

Throughout the year, NRC officials and reps have provided local officials with support on various issues. The committee were represented at the NJC, at national health and safety meetings, on the final appeals committee and on the uniformed operations committee. Paul Revill and Paul Farman attended the meetings of the NFCC on-call practitioners' group.

The major issues that affect our retained members are the same as last year, but just a little bit worse. The decline in calls, take-home pay and job satisfaction continues, resulting in an increasing number of retained members quitting the service. Retained units are understaffed, with fire and rescue services failing to spend money on recruitment, leading to more pressure on members to keep the pump on the run. Dangerous practices, such as the officer in charge required to drive the appliance, and of pumps turning out with three or even two crew continues. Some frontline fire engines have been downgraded to vans, further reducing morale. An increasing number of proposals were put forward to close retained fire stations or remove second pumps across the UK.

On a positive note, the initial tranche of members are buying back pensions from the start of their employment under the second options exercise. Our campaigns to secure the correct payment of CPD, and the correct allocation of public holiday leave are steadily achieving positive results for our members.

A list of the NRC officials and regional reps for 2024 is found in Section L.

K5 OFFICERS' SECTION REPORT

During 2024, the Officers' National Committee (ONC) provided valuable advice to inform the structures of the union, primarily the executive council. The ONC's focus remains officer welfare, specifically the flexi duty system, DECON, additional duties and response vehicle schemes.

The ONC report on response vehicle schemes now sits with the National Joint Council (NJC) Joint Secretaries, and is expected to be included in the second revision of the Grey Book due in late 2025.

In March, the ONC produced a report for the health and safety committee on the subject of work-related stress; this is a significant issue for officer members. The report recognised the legal duty to undertake proactive stress risk assessments, and all our recommendations were supported in full.

The ONC assisted officials in West Midlands, Scotland and Cambridgeshire with advice and guidance on officer-related issues.

The ONC secretary continued to participate in the NJC pay progression working group and uniformed operations committee. In addition, the secretary now sits on the mental health working group. The two ONC resolutions received FBU conference approval.

The ONC attended the MMNB/NJC on 27 February, 4 June and 22 October.

During 2024, the ONC held the following meetings:

- 26 February – London
- 3 June – online
- 8 July – online
- 11 September – online
- 18 September – online
- 3 October – online
- 21 October – Edinburgh
- 5 December – online
- 9-10 December, AGM – Birmingham NEC.

Throughout 2024, the ONC worked hard with great support from the executive council and regions to recruit seven regional representatives, a great achievement to ensure all officers have a voice.

The ONC is now looking forward to 2025 for the 40th anniversary of the flexi duty system (established in 1985), which we intend to celebrate and recognise with an officer school and the publication of an FBU guide.

A list of officers' regional representatives can be found in Section L.

K6 MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

The FBU has negotiated some exclusive benefits for its members. These include:

- legal protection from Thompsons Solicitors
- home, travel, car and pet insurance from UIA Mutual
- cycle insurance 15% discount from Velosure
- a health cash plan from BHSF
- up to 30% off brand new cars
- union Prepaid Plus card
- unionRewards.com for online shopping
- financial planning advice from Lighthouse
- 15% off Brook Hotels room bookings
- discounts on entertainment and more from Rewards for Rescue.

Membership services continue to develop. Members indicate a high level of satisfaction with the products. The union advertised these to members through *Roll Call*, *Firefighter* magazine and on our website. These services provide a small commission to the FBU, which is invested in the wider campaigning work.

K7 MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

STATISTICS AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024

Region	Brigade name	Wholetime	Retained	Control	Non-Grey Book	Total	Political levy	Political levy no affiliation	No political levy	Total	AIF – Yes	AIF – No	Total	Male	Female	Gender unknown	Other	Total
Head office	National official	4	–	–	–	4	4	–	–	4	4	–	4	4	–	–	–	4
Total		4	–	–	–	4	4	–	–	4	4	–	4	4	–	–	–	4
1	Scotland	3,093	1,116	102	8	4,319	2,520	587	1,212	4,319	3,914	405	4,319	3,884	355	78	2	4,319
Total		3,093	1,116	102	8	4,319	2,520	587	1,212	4,319	3,914	405	4,319	3,884	355	78	2	4,319
2	Northern Ireland	776	722	44	–	1,542	229	779	534	1,542	1,500	42	1,542	1,282	128	132	–	1,542
Total		776	722	44	–	1,542	229	779	534	1,542	1,500	42	1,542	1,282	128	132	–	1,542
3	Cleveland	316	46	10	12	384	102	197	85	384	345	39	384	345	39	–	–	384
3	Durham	269	57	19	1	346	148	110	88	346	283	63	346	294	52	–	–	346
3	Northumberland	117	68	10	1	196	81	91	24	196	185	11	196	165	31	–	–	196
3	Tyne and Wear	536	3	18	12	569	183	234	152	569	513	56	569	505	64	–	–	569
Total		1,238	174	57	26	1,495	514	632	349	1,495	1,326	169	1,495	1,309	186	–	–	1,495
4	Humberside	415	109	29	7	560	289	162	109	560	490	70	560	498	62	–	–	560
4	North Yorkshire	248	99	4	12	363	151	71	141	363	303	60	363	321	42	–	–	363
4	South Yorkshire	574	51	29	24	678	173	315	190	678	603	75	678	587	85	6	–	678
4	West Yorkshire	823	20	29	16	888	258	251	379	888	765	123	888	774	111	3	–	888
Total		2,060	279	91	59	2,489	871	799	819	2,489	2,161	328	2,489	2,180	300	9	–	2,489
5	Cheshire	385	84	33	27	529	344	59	126	529	454	75	529	404	110	15	–	529
5	Cumbria	204	128	–	5	337	162	74	101	337	288	49	337	281	56	–	–	337
5	Greater Manchester	1,337	–	–	28	1,365	816	340	209	1,365	1,276	89	1,365	1,221	138	6	–	1,365
5	Isle of Man	39	65	1	–	105	39	4	62	105	89	16	105	96	7	2	–	105
5	Lancashire	559	153	–	6	718	336	188	194	718	629	89	718	635	83	–	–	718
5	Merseyside	509	1	29	36	575	313	150	112	575	491	84	575	456	109	10	–	575
Total		3,033	431	63	102	3,629	2,010	815	804	3,629	3,227	402	3,629	3,093	503	33	–	3,629
6	Derbyshire	343	193	34	2	572	264	183	125	572	533	39	572	466	105	–	1	572
6	Leicestershire	340	62	15	6	423	202	106	115	423	374	49	423	376	47	–	–	423
6	Lincolnshire	157	223	14	7	401	239	82	80	401	362	39	401	351	50	–	–	401
6	Northamptonshire	242	64	8	1	315	79	138	98	315	292	23	315	273	41	1	–	315
6	Nottinghamshire	394	138	–	20	552	182	232	138	552	517	35	552	490	59	3	–	552
Total		1,476	680	71	36	2,263	966	741	556	2,263	2,078	185	2,263	1,956	302	4	1	2,263
7	Hereford and Worcester	194	89	18	1	302	158	57	87	302	264	38	302	260	42	–	–	302
7	Shropshire	152	56	7	3	218	81	57	80	218	185	33	218	189	26	3	–	218
7	Staffordshire	250	143	–	6	399	170	130	99	399	359	40	399	353	42	4	–	399
7	Warwickshire	207	40	19	4	270	65	65	140	270	219	51	270	228	40	2	–	270
7	West Midlands	1,153	–	54	7	1,214	448	404	362	1,214	1,026	188	1,214	1,002	198	14	–	1,214
Total		1,956	328	98	21	2,403	922	713	768	2,403	2,053	350	2,403	2,032	348	23	–	2,403
8	Mid and West Wales	364	192	27	9	592	266	200	126	592	543	49	592	522	70	–	–	592
8	North Wales	261	300	16	8	585	304	165	116	585	545	40	585	493	91	1	–	585
8	South Wales	778	238	30	–	1,046	451	374	221	1,046	966	80	1,046	956	87	3	–	1,046
Total		1,403	730	73	17	2,223	1,021	739	463	2,223	2,054	169	2,223	1,971	248	4	–	2,223
9	Bedfordshire	230	40	18	5	293	128	100	65	293	259	34	293	252	40	1	–	293
9	Cambridgeshire	232	68	20	–	320	140	64	116	320	283	37	320	274	43	3	–	320
9	Essex	558	165	25	3	751	355	209	187	751	693	58	751	674	72	5	–	751
9	Hertfordshire	386	63	16	8	473	205	142	126	473	396	77	473	408	50	15	–	473
9	Norfolk	242	116	6	–	364	178	132	54	364	344	20	364	336	27	1	–	364
9	Suffolk	171	94	2	–	267	136	74	57	267	235	32	267	236	22	8	1	267
Total		1,819	546	87	16	2,468	1,142	721	605	2,468	2,210	258	2,468	2,180	254	33	1	2,468
10	London	4,589	–	35	9	4,633	2,640	1,435	558	4,633	4,334	299	4,633	4,108	513	9	3	4,633
Total		4,589	–	35	9	4,633	2,640	1,435	558	4,633	4,334	299	4,633	4,108	513	9	3	4,633

Region	Brigade name	Wholetime	Retained	Control	Non-Grey Book	Total	Political levy	Political levy no affiliation	No political levy	Total	AIF – Yes	AIF – No	Total	Male	Female	Gender unknown	Other	Total
11	East Sussex	293	65	2	12	372	129	63	180	372	323	49	372	326	41	5	–	372
11	Kent	630	160	19	27	836	339	175	322	836	779	57	836	739	80	17	–	836
11	Surrey	387	20	36	2	445	225	89	131	445	396	49	445	396	46	3	–	445
11	West Sussex	293	84	–	7	384	184	70	130	384	354	30	384	351	32	1	–	384
Total		1,603	329	57	48	2,037	877	397	763	2,037	1,852	185	2,037	1,812	199	26	–	2,037
12	Berkshire	353	16	36	13	418	210	107	101	418	367	51	418	358	60	–	–	418
12	Buckinghamshire	282	37	–	–	319	172	37	110	319	283	36	319	293	25	–	1	319
12	Hampshire and Isle of Wight	485	103	21	7	616	186	178	252	616	537	79	616	544	66	6	–	616
12	Oxfordshire	213	168	–	8	389	199	69	121	389	354	35	389	345	43	1	–	389
Total		1,333	324	57	28	1,742	767	391	584	1,742	1,541	201	1,742	1,540	194	7	1	1,742
13	Avon	428	80	34	4	546	221	193	132	546	468	78	546	465	76	5	–	546
13	Cornwall	166	162	14	1	343	120	111	112	343	311	32	343	300	36	6	1	343
13	Devon and Somerset	465	307	20	2	794	298	141	355	794	677	117	794	707	78	9	–	794
13	Dorset and Wiltshire	374	212	16	2	604	229	211	164	604	535	69	604	550	53	1	–	604
13	Gloucestershire	133	48	2	–	183	63	44	76	183	164	19	183	136	39	7	1	183
Total		1,566	809	86	9	2,470	931	700	839	2,470	2,155	315	2,470	2,158	282	28	2	2,470
Grand Total		25,949	6,468	921	379	33,717	15,414	9,449	8,854	33,717	30,409	3,308	33,717	29,509	3,812	386	10	33,717

SECTION L

INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION

L1

INTRODUCTION

During 2024, the FBU held a number of elections. The executive council thanked those who have served the union, and welcomed those elected to represent our members.

The executive council met 32 times during the year. The finance and administration committee (FAC) monitored the union’s finances.

L2

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETINGS

15 January 2024	14 February 2024	21 May 2024	26 September 2024
29 January 2024	27 February 2024	4 June 2024	1 October 2024
1 February 2024	11 March 2024	10 June 2024	2 October 2024
5 February 2024	27 March 2024	11 June 2024	3 October 2024
6 February 2024	19 April 2024	12 June 2024	15 October 2024
7 February 2024	25 April 2024	4 July 2024	22 October 2024
8 February 2024	29 April 2024	18 July 2024	21 November 2024
13 February 2024	10 May 2024	12 August 2024	18 December 2024

L3 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ATTENDANCE RECORD

	POSSIBLE	ACTUAL	REASONS FOR NON-ATTENDANCE
Ian Murray (President)	31	28	3 – compassionate leave
Matt Wrack (General Secretary)	31	29	1 – sick leave 1 – other union business
Ben Selby (Assistant General Secretary)	31	26	1 – sick leave 1 – family leave 1 – annual leave 2 – other union business
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS			
Colin Brown	31	30	1 – other union business
Jim Quinn	31	31	
Tony Curry	31	28	2 – annual leave 1 – personal leave
Pete Smith	31	30	1 – medical leave
Les Skarratts (until 21 June 2024)	22	21	1 – annual leave
Andrew Fox-Hewitt (from 22 June 2024)	11	9	2 – annual leave
Adam Taylor	31	29	1 – compassionate leave 1 – annual leave
Andrew Scattergood	31	27	3 – annual leave 1 – other union business
Cerith Griffiths (until 30 August 2024)	24	23	1 – other union business
Gareth Tovey (from 31 August 2024)	8	8	
Jamie Newell	31	29	2 – annual leave
David Shek	31	17	9 – annual leave 3 – other union business 2 – conflict of interest
Joe Weir	31	28	3 – annual leave
Steve Wright	31	25	1 – other union business 3 – annual leave 2 – compassionate leave
Val Hampshire	31	28	2 – annual leave 1 – other union business
NATIONAL OFFICERS			
Tam McFarlane	31	0	31 – sick Leave
Mark Rowe	31	28	3 – annual leave
Riccardo la Torre	31	22	8 – family leave 2 – sick leave 1 – annual leave

* Some EC meetings took place on the same day or on consecutive days (See Section L2), inflating some non-attendance figures.

L4 FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

The finance and administration committee (FAC) continued to review all current structures and practices of the union, including education, resources, finances, research, publications and other communications, while ensuring the structures of the organisation are adequate to provide sufficient support to officials and service to members.

In 2024, the FAC met on the following occasions:

24 January	6 March	26 April	11 June
17 July	19 September	1 October	16 December

Membership of the FAC comprised the following officials in 2023:

Matt Wrack	Colin Brown	Joe Weir
Ben Selby	Jim Quinn	Steve Wright
Ian Murray	Pete Smith	Tam McFarlane

L5 ELECTIONS

ELECTION OF GENERAL SECRETARY

Number of voting papers returned8,648
Number of voting papers found to be invalid (blank/spoilt)24
Matt Wrack.....3,436
Steve Wright.....5,188
Certified by Popularis Ltd 14 January 2025
Steve Wright elected to office 14 January 2025
Term of office commenced 14 January 2025

ELECTION OF NATIONAL TREASURER

Jim Quinn elected to office 12 August 2024
Term of office commenced 12 August 2024

ELECTIONS OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS

Election of executive council member North West (region 5)
Andrew Fox-Hewitt elected to office 22 June 2024
Term of office commenced 22 June 2024

Election of executive council member Wales (region 8)
Gareth Tovey elected to office 31 August 2024
Term of office commenced 31 August 2024

Election of executive council member London (region 10)
David Shek re-elected to office 17 May 2024
Term of office commenced 17 May 2024

ELECTIONS OF REGIONAL AND SECTIONAL SECRETARIES

Election of regional secretary North West (region 5)

Andrew Fox-Hewitt elected to office 9 November 2023
Term of office commenced 1 January 2024

Election of regional secretary North West (region 5)

Ian Hibbert elected to office 6 August 2024
Term of office commenced 6 August 2024

ELECTIONS OF REGIONAL AND SECTIONAL CHAIRS

Election of regional chair East Midlands (region 6)

Chris Kemp elected to office 8 February 2024
Term of office to commence 8 February 2024

Election of regional chair Wales (region 8)

Ruth Bateman elected to office 8 February 2024
Term of office to commence 8 February 2024

Election of regional chair Southern (region 12)

Chris Wycherley elected to office 6 August 2024
Term of office commenced 8 October 2024

Election of regional chair South West (region 13)

Scott Young elected to office 18 March 2024
Term of office commenced 18 March 2024

ELECTIONS OF REGIONAL TREASURERS

Election of regional treasurer North West (region 5)

Dave Pike elected to office 8 February 2024
Term of office commenced 8 February 2024

L6 REGIONAL OFFICES AND OFFICIALS

REGION 1 – SCOTLAND

FBU Regional Office

4th Floor
52 St Enoch Square
Glasgow
G1 4AA
0141 221 2309

Executive council member

Colin Brown

Regional secretary

John McKenzie

Regional chair

Gus Sproul

Regional treasurer

Seona Hart

REGION 2 – NORTHERN IRELAND

FBU Regional Office

14 Bachelors Walk
Lisburn
County Antrim
BT28 1XJ
028 9266 4622

Executive council member

Jim Quinn

Regional secretary

Phil Millar

Regional chair

Dermot Rooney

Regional treasurer

Chris Blayney

REGION 3 – NORTH EAST

FBU Regional Office

1 Carlton Court
5th Avenue
Team Valley
Gateshead
NE11 0AZ
0191 487 4142

Executive council member

Tony Curry

Regional secretary

Brian Harris

Regional chair

Karl Wager

Regional treasurer

Dave Howe

Brigades

Cleveland
Durham
Northumberland
Tyne and Wear

Brigade secretary

Dave Howe
Andy Murray
Mark Dowthwaite
Wayne Anderson

Brigade chair

Karl Wager
Vacant
David Habberjam
Chris Cook

REGION 4 – YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE

FBU Regional Office

9 Marsh Street
Rothwell
Leeds
LS26 0AG
0113 288 7000

Executive council member

Pete Smith

Regional secretary

Dave Williams
Gavin Marshall

Regional chair

Steve Howley

Regional treasurer

Gavin Marshall
Matt Nicholls

Brigades

Humberside

North Yorkshire
South Yorkshire
West Yorkshire

Brigade secretary

Gavin Marshall
Sam Miller-Hodges
Steve Howley
Matt Nicholls
Martyn Bairstow

Brigade chair

Sam Miller-Hodges
Janet Hayton
Paul James
Stuart Smith
Mathew Herrin

REGION 5 – NORTH WEST

FBU Regional Office

The Lighthouse
Lower Mersey Street
Ellesmere Port
Cheshire
CH65 2AL
0151 357 4400

Executive council member

Les Skarratts
Andrew Fox-Hewitt

Regional secretary

Edward Burrows
Andrew Fox-Hewitt
Ian Hibbert

Regional chair

Daniel Giblin
Lee Hunter

Regional treasurer

David Pike

Brigades

Cheshire

Cumbria
Greater Manchester
Isle of Man
Lancashire

Merseyside

Brigade secretary

Andrew Fox-Hewitt
Andrew Boyle
Oliver Burrow
David Pike
Nicholas Hays
Kevin Wilkie
Sean Pilkington
Ian Hibbert
Lee Hunter

Brigade chair

Jack Fellows

Steven Mattinson
Ross Strother
Blake Kelly
David Shaw
Mark Hoyle
Lee Hunter
Graeme Jones

REGION 6 – EAST MIDLANDS

FBU Regional Office

The Waterside Offices
Pavilion Road
West Bridgford
Nottingham
NG2 5FA

Executive council member

Adam Taylor

Regional secretary

Mark Stilwell

Regional chair

Mark Stilwell

Chris Kemp

Regional treasurer

Clare Hudson

Brigades

Derbyshire
Leicestershire

Lincolnshire
Northamptonshire
Nottinghamshire

Brigade secretary

Chris Tapp

Harry Brant

Karl Keuneke
Chris Kemp
Stephen Tucker

Brigade chair

Tony Dempsey
Daniel Fathers
Nicole Marvin
Daniel Taylor
Jeremy Goodfellow
Brendan Woodhouse

REGION 7 – WEST MIDLANDS

FBU Regional Office

195-197 Halesowen Road
Old Hill
West Midlands
B64 6HE
0138 441 3633

Executive council member

Andrew Scattergood

Regional secretary

Billy Holland

Regional chair

Martin Starkey

Regional treasurer

Sasha Hitchins

Brigades

Hereford and Worcester
Shropshire

Staffordshire
Warwickshire

West Midlands

Brigade secretary

Neil Bevan

Rob Cartwright

Martin Starkey
Stephen Rule
Neil Stuart
Sasha Hitchins

Brigade chair

Trevor Connolly
Tristan Orr-Berwick
Simon Morris
Jack Lee

Carl Goode

REGION 8 – WALES

FBU Regional Office

2nd Floor
Hastings House
Fitzalan Court
Cardiff
CF24 0BL
02920 496474

Executive council member

Cerith Griffiths
Gareth Tovey

Regional secretary

Duncan Stewart-Ball

Regional chair

Ruth Bateman

Regional treasurer

Gemma Thomas

Brigades

Mid and West Wales

North Wales

South Wales

Brigade secretary

Dan Bartley

Matthew Ryan

Rebekah Uden

Paul Davies

David Waller

Brigade chair

Deiniol Lloyd

David Ricketts

Stuart Stanley

Gareth Tovey

REGION 9 – EASTERN

FBU Regional Office

228 Atlantic Square
Station Road
Witham
Essex
CM8 2TL
01376 521521

Executive council member

Jamie Newell

Regional secretary

Rebecca Lewington

Regional chair

Kevin Driver

Regional treasurer

Harry Powell

Brigades

Bedfordshire
Cambridgeshire
Essex
Hertfordshire

Norfolk

Suffolk

Brigade secretary

Craig Carter

Mark Harriss

Richard Maddams

Rob Fortune

Ryan Hastings

Richard Beeby

Brigade chair

Mark Cook

Vacant

Martyn Wager

Tony Smith

Emma Young

Al Jaye

Phil Johnston

REGION 10 – LONDON

FBU Regional Office

Alpha House
100 Borough High Street
London
SE1 1LB

Executive council member

David Shek

Regional secretary

Jon Lambe

Regional chair

Gareth Beeton

Regional treasurer

Adam Shaw

REGION 11 – SOUTH EAST

FBU Regional Office

Unit 11
Hunns Mere Way
Woodingdean
Brighton
BN2 6AH
01273 309762

Executive council member

Joe Weir

Regional secretary

Andy Petch
Ed Fox

Regional chair

Tim Green

Regional treasurer

Dave Turner

Brigades

East Sussex
Kent
Surrey
West Sussex

Brigade secretary

Simon Herbert
Danny Barrett
Karl Jones
Antony Walker
Peter Horner

Brigade chair

Ben Ashton
Tim Green
Graham Kitchen
Pascal Volant

REGION 12 – SOUTHERN

FBU Regional Office

Eleanor Marx House,
Unit 2, 12 Richfield Place,
Reading
RG1 8EQ

Executive council member

Steve Wright

Regional secretary

Mark Chapman

Regional chair

Greg O'Neill
Chris Wycherley

Regional treasurer

Lee Newport

Brigades

Berkshire

Buckinghamshire
Hampshire and Isle of Wight
Oxfordshire

Brigade secretary

Steve Collins

Chris Wycherley
Jamie Kelly
Nick Bourke

Brigade chair

Paul Mortimer
James Hunt
Tony Brandon
Dave Hunt
Jonathan Shuker

REGION 13 – SOUTH WEST

FBU Regional Office

158 Muller Road
Horfield
Bristol
BS7 9RE
0117 935 5132

Executive council member

Val Hampshire

Regional secretary

Dave Roberts

Regional chair

Scott Young

Regional treasurer

Amanda Mills

Brigades

Avon
Cornwall
Devon and Somerset
Dorset and Wiltshire
Gloucestershire

Brigade secretary

Amanda Mills
Gary Cotton
James Leslie
Andy Corben
Ben Gwyer

Brigade chair

Matthew Senior
Martin Murt
Alex Smith
Leah Smith
Richard Champ

EQUALITY SECTION REPRESENTATIVES

	B&EMM	LGBT+	NWC
Secretary	Amit Malde Kasey LeGall	Pat Carberry Maria Buck	Robyn Richardson
Chair	Karen Bell	Maria Buck Andrew Steel	Katie Holloway
Region 1	Vacant	Andrew Steel	Kerry McCrone
Region 2	Vacant	Karen McDowell	Jess Doran
Region 3	Dean Pounder	Linzi Blake	Holly Ferguson
Region 4	Vacant	Rebecca Savin	Kirsty Wright
Region 5	Robert Lewis	Matthew Black	Maccyla Turner
Region 6	Kasey LeGall	Nicole Marvin	Georgina Fielding
Region 7	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant
Region 8	Alex Szekely	Ellie Hathaway	Jo Trafford
Region 9	Dwight Williams	Vacant	Vacant
Region 10	Karen Bell	Gemma Betts	Leoni Munslow
Region 11	Vacant	Jake Kaye	Carys Wright
Region 12	Richard Brown	Sam Underwood	Leigh-Marie Rand
Region 13	Lionel McCrea	Fay Forbes	Kate Yhnell

TRADE SECTION REPRESENTATIVES

	CSNC	NRC	ONC
Secretary	Caroline Saunderson	Paul Revill	Peter Trayner
Chair	Sherri Kitson	Paul Farman	Tony Walker
Region 1	Dawn Forrest	Vacant	Rachel Rogers
Region 2	Vacant	Johnny McKinstry	Jason Kennedy
Region 3	Lyndsey Burton	Mark Thexton	Chris Swift-Hunter
Region 4	Vacant	Tom Cooke	Tony Walker
Region 5	Sherri Kitson	Vacant	Chris Evans
Region 6	Hayleigh Marks	Thomas Marchant	Chris Kemp
Region 7	Jane Gummery	Thomas Marchant Philip Williams	Becky Hodgkins
Region 8	Gemma Thomas	Gareth Jianikos	Gareth Jianikos
Region 9	Vacant	Andre Whitty	Gareth Boyd
Region 10	Nikki Haxton-Jones	n/a	Peter Johnson
Region 11	Vacant	Vacant	Danny Barrett
Region 12	Chris Hunt	Luke Fowler	Nick Bourke
Region 13	John Rickard	Vacant	Vacant

OTHER REPRESENTATIVES

	Education and learning	Fairness at work	Health and safety
Region 1	Kim Ferguson	Vacant	Barry Johnstone Scott MacRory
Region 2	James Patterson	Karen McDowell	Barry Mitchell
Region 3	Andy Murray	Hollie Codling	Chris Cook
Region 4	Rebecca Savin	Vacant	Greg Tucker
Region 5	James Collier	Emily Hollands	Samuel Merriott
Region 6	Stephen Tucker	Helen Durman	Dan Cresswell
Region 7	Jane Gummery	Vacant	Louise Fletcher
Region 8	Stuart Stanley	Hannah Lodder	Eleanor Hathaway
Region 9	Craig Carter	Mark Cook	Rebecca Lewington
Region 10	Adam Shaw	Vicky Shaw	Gareth Beeton
Region 11	Dave Turner	Matthew Drinkwater	Rob Parkin
Region 12	Luke Fowler	Rob Martin	Kieron Thomas
Region 13	Dave Roberts	Vacant	Jonathan Walker
B&EMM	Vacant	Vacant	Corneil Power
CSNC	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant
LGBT+	Vacant	Vacant	Pat Carberry
NRC	Vacant	Vacant	Paul Revill
NWC	Vacant	Vacant	Jess Doran
ONC	Nick Bourke	Chris Evans	Nick Bourke

L7 RETIRED OFFICIALS

Les Skarratts	Executive council member region 5
Cerith Griffiths	Executive council member region 8
Pat Carberry	LGBT+ secretary
Daniel Giblin	Regional chair region 5
Scott Young	Regional chair region 7
Kevin Wilkie	Brigade secretary Lancashire
Tony Smith	Brigade chair Hertfordshire
Gary Lennie	Standing orders committee

L8 FINAL APPEALS COMMITTEE

Region/Section	Name
1	John McKenzie
2	Chris Blayney
3	Brian Harris
4	Gavin Marshall
5	Andrew Fox-Hewitt
6	Mark Stilwell
7	Sasha Hitchins
8	Duncan Stewart-Ball
9	Rebecca Lewington
10	Jon Lambe
11	Ed Fox
12	Mark Chapman
13	Dave Roberts
BEMM	Amit Malde
LGBT+	Maria Buck
NWC	Robyn Richardson
CSNC	Caroline Saunderson
NRC	Paul Revill
ONC	Peter Trayner

L9 UNION TRUSTEES

The executive council wishes to place on record its appreciation to Alan McLean and Keith Handscomb for serving as trustees of the union in accordance with the provision of the rule book.

L10 POLITICAL FUND

The FBU's political fund continues to be used to support campaigning political work, as well as some of the union's political education and international campaigning. The financial resources in the political fund are used in all areas of political work to benefit members by campaigning on their behalf at a local and national level.

Under the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992, trade unions must hold a vote every 10 years asking members whether they can spend money on 'political objects' or whether their 'political fund' can continue (2024HOC0147MW).

Between 2 and 29 April 2024, the FBU held the required political fund ballot. On 30 April, the FBU announced the result. Members returned a 91% 'Yes' vote on a 23% turnout (2024HOC0197MW).

L11 COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

The communications department is responsible for the FBU's external communications, including the website, social media, *Firefighter* magazine, press and media work, and campaigns.

2024 was dominated by the general election. Much of our communications work was orientated to shifting the debate on the fire service, workers' rights and other key issues. One of the department's first tasks was to effectively communicate the role of the FBU's political fund in time for the political fund ballot, which took place in April.

The FBU played a leading role in campaigning for the abolition of the Minimum Service Levels Act, reflected in its communications, from animation explainers to pro-active media work. The union was a prominent voice behind the wider New Deal for Working People, now in the Employment Rights Bill. Investment and national standards were the two other key demands on which the union campaigned extensively.

After the election, the focus shifted to fighting for Labour to deliver on its promises. The communications department led on the union's flagship 'Time to Deliver' rally on Tuesday 8 October, which saw a thousand FBU members gather in central London. Hundreds went on to lobby their newly elected MPs with the message: 'rebuild our fire service'.

The communications department assisted with a large number of local campaigns on issues such as crewing numbers and cuts, working closely with officials and activists in sections, brigades and regions; and fed local issues into the union's national campaigning work.

The 'Equality Matters' campaign continued to progress, with new video content and materials. The department promoted the disabled and neurodivergent members' forum and assisted the national women's committee with the 'Fight for 52' campaign. The department worked to communicate the content of the FBU's independent sexual harassment report to the national media.

The department assisted with the union's presence at the Grenfell Tower silent march, and the wider campaign in support of justice for community. In September, the communications department led on managing a large quantity of media coverage on the Grenfell Tower Inquiry report.

Health and safety continued to be a significant focus for the department's work – on DECON, mental health, BA policy, and the decision-making of the Health and Safety Executive. The union's mental health work also became a focus ahead of the early 2025 launch of UCLan's mental health survey.

The union's presence in the media remains at a slightly higher level than before the pay campaign, and the FBU continues to punch well above its weight. September (with the Grenfell report) was the media's biggest month, followed by August (the Dagenham cladding fire) and July (the general election). The FBU's presence on social media continued to grow, with accounts on Facebook, X, Instagram and YouTube.

L12 RESEARCH REPORT

The research and policy department works to the priorities of annual conference and the executive council, under the direction of the general secretary and national officers.

During 2024, research and policy staff assisted elected officials with interventions at Westminster. This included the secretariat for the union's parliamentary group, attending all-party parliamentary groups on fire matters, the TUCG, the production of the *Fire and Rescue Service Matters* bulletin, and lobbies of MPs. The department also assisted officials with establishing relations with ministers, Labour's shadow team and other politicians. After the general election, this also meant liaison with ministers, civil servants and other politicians.

The department assisted elected officials with drafting submissions to Westminster government consultations and Westminster legislation, including those on minimum service levels, the Covid-19 inquiry and other submissions (see Section D). The department also assisted FBU officials with submissions to devolved administrations (see Section E). Staff assisted with organising the 8 October rally in London.

During 2024, the department coordinated the response to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry (GTI), including recommendations, briefings for elected officials, liaison with the FBU's legal team and assistance with briefing MPs (see Section E). The research and policy department supported elected FBU officials with interventions into the TUC Congress, the Labour Party and other major events (see Section F).

The department assisted national and sectional officials with a range of equalities matters, including conferences, schools, culture reviews, 'Fight for 52', domestic violence guidance, and the anti-sexual harassment working group. Staff also helped with the DECON campaign, evaluating new Grenfell research, the Grenfell serious accident investigation, and the mental health project.

The department provided editorial support on all aspects of FBU conference. This included the executive council's annual report, executive council policy statements to conference, the record of decisions and the report of proceedings.

L13 FIREFIGHTERS 100 LOTTERY

The Firefighters 100 Lottery was set up to support firefighters, bereaved families and the firefighting profession. The FBU commissioned an external lottery company, Gatherwell Ltd, to independently manage the sales of tickets, weekly draws and paying out prizes. Each lottery ticket has remained at £1, with at least 50% going to support good causes, 20% for the weekly prize draw winner, 2% for second prize and a further 7% used to distribute multiple winners of £5. This year the lottery maintained 5,000 average weekly ticket sales throughout the year.

In 2024 the Lottery Distribution Panel agreed the payments in accordance with the good causes criteria of the lottery fund. Those details are found in Section M2, in notes to the accounts.

L14 RED PLAQUE SCHEME

The second good cause of the Firefighters100 lottery states:

"Memorials and remembrance: to support, establish and maintain memorials and/or memorial events in remembrance of firefighters killed in the line of duty."

To achieve this, the FBU initiated the Red Plaque scheme, which aims to place a unique plaque near the scene of an incident where a firefighter lost their life. Begun in 2017, each plaque bears a similar inscription which honours "the bravery and sacrifice" of the firefighter whose name appears on the plaque.

Ten Red Plaques were unveiled in 2024. These were:

- Barry Martin, Scotland
- Ian Cameron, Humberside
- The National Red Plaque Firefighters Memorial - Red Knights, Essex
- Frederick Hawkins, Arthur Batt-Rawden and Charles Gadd, London
- Roderick Macleod, Scotland
- Roderick Nicolson, Scotland
- Bob Smith and Paul Parkin, South Yorkshire
- Robert A Crampin and Keith David Marshall, West Midlands
- Henry 'Harry' Stafford Colebourne, Cheshire
- Wesley Orr, Northern Ireland

To date, 69 Red Plaques commemorating 102 named firefighters and two group plaques have been laid. One of the group plaques is dedicated to Northern Ireland firefighters and the other is a National Red Plaque Firefighters Memorial organised by the Red Knights.

There are 49 Red Plaques which have been formally commissioned, but not yet laid. These commemorate the names of 121 firefighters (48 of whom are named on a single plaque covering the Plymouth blitz). There are a number of applications currently under consideration but not yet commissioned. These will continue to be processed in accordance with the second good cause of the lottery.

The Red Plaque website has become the primary source for applications and storing information on plaques. This can be found at www.redplaque.org.uk.

L15 FBU ONLINE SHOP

The FBU's official shop is available online at <https://shop.fbu.org.uk>

The stated aim of the shop is "to make available high-quality value for money official FBU merchandise to our members and supporters all year round".

The official FBU shop is run by ex-firefighter and FBU member Kym Napier and overseen by head office. During 2024, the shop continued to attract interest and sales. The FBU profit was £4,873.36 (after taking away costs). All FBU profit goes to the good causes fund supported by the Firefighters100 fund.

SECTION M

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

M1 INTRODUCTION

GENERAL SECRETARY'S AND NATIONAL TREASURER'S INTRODUCTION

2024 ACCOUNTS

TOTAL FUNDS

The union's total funds as at 31 December 2024 were £17.16m (2023 – £14.49m). This represents a significant increase of £2.67m. The main factor in the increase of our funds was a £2.95m increase in general reserves, owing to a positive re-valuation of our pension scheme.

As at 31 December 2024 our accident and injury fund was £4.86m (2023 – £5.03m), political fund was £0.84m (2023 – £0.89m) and lottery fund was £0.04m (2023 – £0.09m).

The accident and injury fund is held in a mixture of cash and investments and is a restricted fund which can only be used for claims as set out in the FBU rule book. The political fund and lottery fund are managed to ensure that there is always a small operating surplus to cover forthcoming demands and annual rates of inflation.

GENERAL FUND

At 31 December 2024, the general fund excluding the defined benefit pension asset was £7.93m (2023 – £6.62m). This increase of £1.31m is due to a reduction of our current liabilities as well as an operating surplus in the year, compared to 2023 (excluding pension movements).

The pension fund surplus at 31 December 2024 stood at £3.5m (2023 – £1.86m). This increase of £1.64m is due to the actuaries' revaluation of the pension scheme.

The general fund at 31 December 2024 was £11.43m (2023 – £8.48m).

There has been a 26% decrease in the value of investments, from £7.36m to £5.43m. This has occurred as a result of selling of shares to finance the future purchase of a new head office therefore, any revaluation gains will be offset against any further liquidations, should it be required.

RESERVES POLICY

The executive council is keenly aware of the need to secure the union's future beyond the immediate day-to-day requirements. To continue to honour our commitments to our members the union needs to have sufficient funds to be able to absorb periodic setbacks in our ability to raise funds and to take advantage of opportunities as situations arise. It is prudent that reserves should be maintained to finance working capital requirements.

The union has also looked at timing the cash outflows to match the timing of cash inflows. Where this is not possible, reserves needed to fund expenditure in advance of income receipts, or expenditure delayed, are estimated.

FUTURE PLANS AND KEY PRIORITIES

The finance department are currently working closely with regional treasurers and national officers with the objective of achieving greater transparency and accountability. We are looking at phasing out the number of active prepaid cards and training treasurers for greater regional autonomy.

The FBU holds property assets with a net book value of £1.9m as at 31 December 2024 (2023 – £1.9m). An assessment regarding rebuild valuation costs was completed for the union's insurers in Dec 2024, covering the full union property portfolio.

FINANCIAL REVIEW OF 2024

In 2024 our total income was £12.75m (2023 – £11.93m) and our total expenditure £12.79m (2023 – £13.21m). This gave us a total surplus of £1.09m (2023 – £27k) including surplus on investments' revaluation and before actuarial pension adjustments. The surplus after actuarial pension adjustments was £2.67m (2023 – £2.01m) and our general fund surplus has increased to £11.43m (2023 – £8.48m).

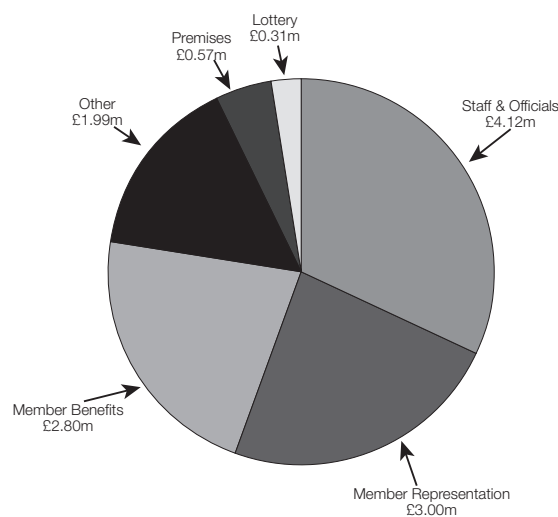
Positive pension scheme actuarial adjustments of £1.59m (2023 – £1.99m) further contributed to the surplus for the year. These adjustments are calculated using external factors completely out of our control and therefore cannot be forecast with any accuracy and do vary significantly from year to year.

During 2024 our ordinary membership levels fell by 222, 0.65% (2023 – rose 1,243, 3.80%) to 33,717 (2023 – 33,939). Membership income from contributions increased to £12.3m (2023 – £11.3m) due mainly to the increase in the contribution rates in 2024

Our expenditure decreased by £414k (2023 – increased £836k) during 2024, owing primarily to a reduction on legal fees and office expenses.

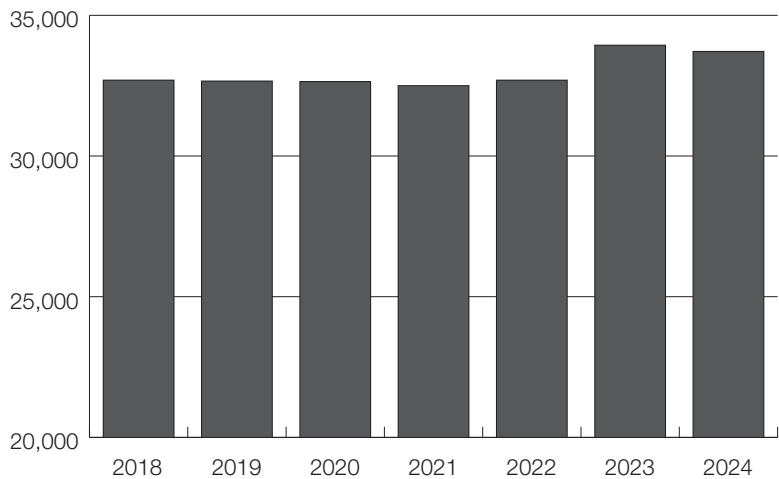
Set out below is a chart which shows a breakdown of our expenditure for 2024. As you can see the bulk of our expenditure is in three areas, namely: staffing, running costs protecting our members’ interests, and member benefits.

Expenditure £12.79m

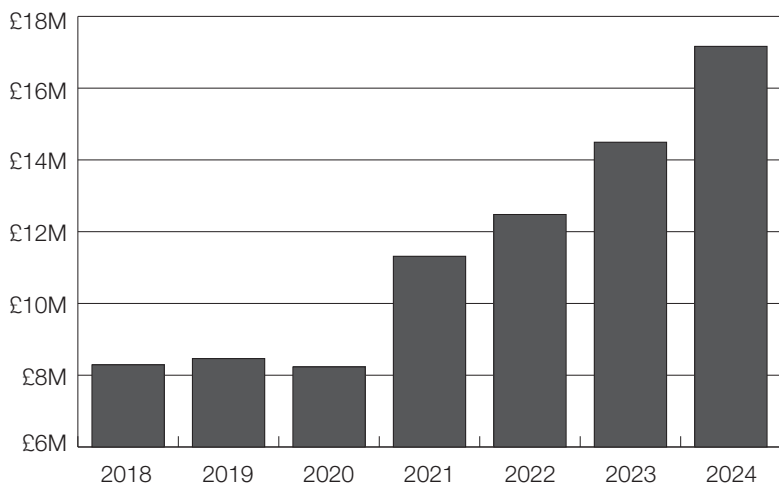


As a result of the overall surplus of £2.67m for 2024, our funds have now increased from £14.49m to £17.16m. This is made up of the accident and injury fund £4.86m, political fund £837k, general fund £11.43m and the lottery fund £36k.

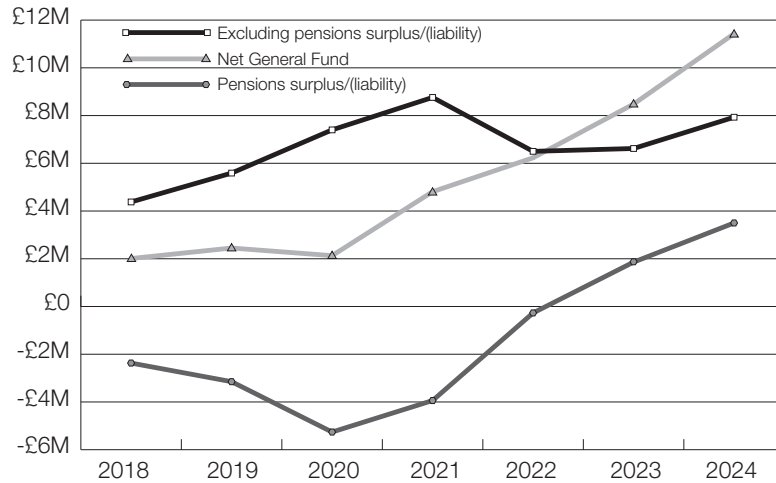
Number of members



Total funds



General Fund



GENERAL FUND BUDGET 2025

The budget for 2025 is summarised below:

	£'000
Income	
Contributions	10,840
Other	—
Total	10,840
Expenditure	
Staff Costs	2,600
Other Costs	7,641
Total	10,241
Operating surplus	599

CONCLUSION

The 2025 budget represents a prudent approach over the coming year, allowing for additional one-off costs relating to the relocation of our head office premises to the new site in central London. We have factored in reductions in some areas as we anticipate less costs for press and comms and education and goods for presentation in 2025. We are also introducing changes to working practices in some areas to reduce costs, such as more use of teams to enable more remote meetings along with renegotiating new contracts for our overheads.

The senior management team of the union have been tasked with ensuring that the key areas of need and risk are appropriately managed and funded. The union has sufficient working capital to enable it to continue as a going concern for the foreseeable future, being a period of at least 12 months from the date of signing the financial statements.

Summary of financial results of the last 5 years

	2024	2023	20212	20201	20120
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Income					
Contributions	12,258	11,331	10,151	10,301	10,210
ULF grants	35	55	19	198	526
Other	454	540	482	434	415
	12,747	11,926	10,652	10,933	11,151
Expenditure					
Members benefits (note 1)	2,803	3,151	2,821	1,844	1,924
Staff and officials	4,124	4,008	3,912	3,719	3,956
Member representation (note 2)	2,996	3,128	2,779	1,538	1,404
Premises	573	686	696	624	601
Lottery (note 3)	313	321	287	210	322
Other (note 4)	1,984	1,913	1,876	1,625	1,404
	12,793	13,207	12,371	9,560	9,611
Operating surplus/(deficit)	(46)	(1,281)	(1,719)	1,373	1,540
Non-operating	1,131	1,308	(641)	663	724
Pension adjustments	1,586	1,988	3,524	1,048	(2,496)
Overall result	2,671	2,015	1,164	3,084	(232)
General fund	11,430	8,482	6,230	4,815	2,126
Accident & injury fund	4,862	5,029	5,295	5,581	5,332
Political fund	837	894	808	761	681
Lottery	36	89	146	158	92
Total funds	17,165	14,494	12,479	11,315	8,231

Notes:

- 1 Includes legal fees, education and accident and injury costs
- 2 Costs include affiliations, travel, mileage, hotels & subsistence, communications, print, ballots, donations, campaign costs, advertising
- 3 Lottery fund costs include the cost of prizes and external associated administration costs plus grants for good causes
- 4 Includes audit and professional fees, bank charges, depreciation, investment gains/(losses), conference and the cost of 'Fightfighter'.

On behalf of the executive council the general secretary and national treasurer approve their report.



Steve Wright
General Secretary



Jim Quinn
National Treasurer

Date: 26 March 2025

M2 ACCOUNTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

STATEMENT OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The legislation relating to trade unions requires the union to submit a return for each calendar year to the Certification Officer for Trade Unions and Employers' Associations. This return contains accounts, which must give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the union at the year end and of its transactions for the year then ended. The accounts set out on the following pages have been prepared on the same basis and are used to complete the return to the Certification Officer for Trade Unions and Employers' Associations.

The requirement to prepare financial statements that give a true and fair view is the responsibility of the executive council. The executive council is responsible for preparing the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including Financial Reporting Standard 102. In doing so, the executive council is required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures being disclosed and explained in the financial statements.
- Prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to do so.

The executive council is responsible for keeping proper accounting records and establishing and maintaining a satisfactory system of control over its records and transactions in order to comply with the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (Amended). It is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the union and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The union is also responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the union's website. Legislation in the UK governing the preparation and dissemination of accounts may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE FIRE BRIGADES UNION

OPINION

We have audited the financial statements of the Fire Brigades Union for the year ended 31 December 2024 which comprise the Statement of Comprehensive Income, the Statement of Financial Position, the Statement of Changes in Equity, the Statement of Cash Flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Union's affairs as at 31 December 2024 and of its surplus for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

BASIS FOR OPINION

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Union in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

CONCLUSIONS RELATING TO GOING CONCERN

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Executive Council's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Union's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Executive Council with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

OTHER INFORMATION

The Executive Council are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our Auditors' report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

MATTERS ON WHICH WE ARE REQUIRED TO REPORT BY EXCEPTION

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the regulations require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- proper accounting records have not been maintained by the Union; or
- a satisfactory system of financial control has not been maintained by Union; or
- the Union's financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns.

RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE UNION'S EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AND AUDITORS

As described on page 96 the Executive Council are responsible for the preparation of financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. Our responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and International Standards on Auditing (UK). Those standards require us to comply with the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard for Auditors.

AUDITOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Based on our understanding of the Union and the environment in which it operates, we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to Trade Union legislation, data protection regulations and employment law, and we considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements. We also considered those laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the preparation of the financial statements such as the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 and corporation tax regulations.

We evaluated management's incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls), and determined that the principal risks were related to inappropriate journal entries in respect of revenue recognition. Audit procedures performed by the engagement team included:

- Inspecting correspondence with regulators and tax authorities;
- Discussions with management including consideration of known or suspected instances of non-compliance with laws and regulation and fraud;
- Evaluating management's controls designed to prevent and detect irregularities;
- Identifying and testing journals, in particular journal entries with unusual descriptions; and
- Challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in their critical accounting estimates.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

USE OF OUR REPORT

This report is made solely to the members of the Union, as a body, in accordance with the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (amended). Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the members of the Union those matters we are required to state to them in an independent auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Union and the members of the Union as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinion we have formed.



HaysMac LLP

Chartered Accountants, Registered Auditors
10 Queen Street Place, London EC4R 1AG

Date: 15 April 2025

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

For the year ended 31 December 2024

	Note	General fund £	Accident and injury fund £	Political fund £	Lottery fund £	Union learning fund £	2024 £	2023 £
Income								
Contributions	1(f)	10,434,766	1,561,912	260,841	–	–	12,257,519	11,331,033
Investment Income		163,880	–	–	–	–	163,880	239,132
Grants and donations		1,053	–	–	–	34,138	35,191	54,817
Other Income	16	10,563	–	6,000	259,312	–	275,875	275,275
Commission received		5,666	–	–	–	–	5,666	16,265
VAT recoverable		9,057	–	–	–	–	9,057	9,581
		<u>10,624,985</u>	<u>1,561,912</u>	<u>266,841</u>	<u>259,312</u>	<u>34,138</u>	<u>12,747,188</u>	<u>11,926,103</u>
Expenditure								
Benefits	2	1,329,964	1,472,875	–	–	–	2,802,839	3,151,190
Conferences		321,151	–	32,140	–	–	353,291	380,073
Affiliations		187,264	–	169,953	–	–	357,217	222,434
'Firefighter'		161,527	–	–	–	–	161,527	264,606
Commissions		16,039	15,947	7,974	–	–	39,960	38,093
Union learning costs		–	–	–	–	–	–	(9,240)
Staff and officials	3	3,806,305	240,000	43,623	–	34,138	4,124,066	4,008,436
Member representation	4	2,926,206	–	69,667	–	–	2,995,873	3,128,353
Premises	5	572,710	–	–	–	–	572,710	685,784
Other expenditure	6	808,979	–	–	–	–	808,979	808,282
Depreciation	1(c)	263,967	–	–	–	–	263,967	274,512
Lottery good causes and prizes	16	–	–	–	312,640	–	312,640	320,967
Defined benefit net interest cost	12	–	–	–	–	–	–	(66,000)
		<u>10,394,112</u>	<u>1,728,822</u>	<u>323,357</u>	<u>312,640</u>	<u>34,138</u>	<u>12,793,069</u>	<u>13,207,490</u>
Operating surplus/(deficit)		230,873	(166,910)	(56,516)	(53,328)	–	(45,881)	(1,281,387)
Non-operating income and expenditure								
Surplus on disposal of fixed assets		8,377	–	–	–	–	8,377	734,512
Surplus on revaluation of quoted investments	9(a)	253,935	–	–	–	–	253,935	412,005
Surplus on revaluation of unquoted investments	9(b)	868,800	–	–	–	–	868,800	161,490
Total surplus/(deficit) for the year before taxation		1,361,985	(166,910)	(56,516)	(53,328)	–	1,085,231	26,620
Surplus/(deficit) for the year after taxation		1,361,985	(166,910)	(56,516)	(53,328)	–	1,085,231	26,620

The notes on pages 104 to 117 form part of these financial statements

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME (CONTINUED)

For the year ended 31 December 2024

	Note	General fund £	Accident and injury fund £	Political fund £	Lottery fund £	Union learning fund £	2024 £	2023 £
Other comprehensive income								
Actuarial gains/(losses) on post employment benefit obligations		1,665,000	–	–	–	–	1,665,000	(1,100,000)
Return on assets (excluding interest income)		(352,000)	–	–	–	–	(352,000)	3,013,000
Experience gains		273,000	–	–	–	–	273,000	75,000
Total other comprehensive income	12	1,586,000	–	–	–	–	1,586,000	1,988,000
Total comprehensive income/(expense) for the year		2,947,985	(166,910)	(56,516)	(53,328)	–	2,671,231	2,014,620

The notes on pages 104 to 117 form part of these financial statements

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As at 31 December 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed Assets	8	2,162,214	2,295,738
Investments	9	5,432,621	7,358,915
		7,594,835	9,654,653
Current assets			
Debtors	10	961,738	952,432
Cash at bank		7,468,583	5,768,630
Total current assets		8,430,321	6,721,062
Current liabilities	11	(2,357,208)	(3,741,998)
Net current assets		6,073,113	2,979,064
Net assets before pension liability		13,667,948	12,633,717
Defined benefit pension schemes			
The Fire Brigades Union pension scheme		3,497,000	1,860,000
The Fire Brigades Union retirement and death benefits scheme		–	–
Net defined benefit pension liability	12	3,497,000	1,860,000
Total assets after pension liability		17,164,948	14,493,717
Represented by:			
General fund (excluding defined benefit pension schemes)		7,933,332	6,622,347
Defined benefit pension asset/(liability)		3,497,000	1,860,000
General fund		11,430,332	8,482,347
Accident and injury fund		4,861,806	5,028,716
Political fund		837,176	893,692
Lottery	16	35,634	88,962
Total funds		17,164,948	14,493,717

Movement in the union's funds are shown on page 102.

The Executive Council approved these financial statements on 26 March 2025.



S. Wright – General Secretary



I. Murray – President

The notes on pages 104 to 117 form part of these financial statements

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

For the year ended 31 December 2024

	General fund £	Accident and Injury fund £	Political fund £	Lottery fund £	Total £
At 31 December 2022	6,230,169	5,294,799	808,475	145,654	12,479,097
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	264,178	(266,083)	85,217	(56,692)	26,620
Other comprehensive income/(expense) for the year					
Actuarial losses on post-employment benefit obligations	(1,100,000)	–	–	–	(1,100,000)
Return on assets less net interest	3,013,000	–	–	–	3,013,000
Experience gains	75,000	–	–	–	75,000
	1,988,000	–	–	–	1,988,000
At 31 December 2023	8,482,347	5,028,716	893,692	88,962	14,493,717
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	1,361,985	(166,910)	(56,516)	(53,328)	1,085,231
Other comprehensive income/(expense) for the year					
Actuarial losses on post-employment benefit obligations	1,665,000	–	–	–	1,665,000
Return on assets less net interest	(352,000)	–	–	–	(352,000)
Experience gains	273,000	–	–	–	273,000
	1,586,000	–	–	–	1,586,000
At 31 December 2024	11,430,332	4,861,806	837,176	35,634	17,164,948

The notes on pages 104 to 117 form part of these financial statements

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

For the year ended 31 December 2024

	2024 £	2023 £
Cash flows arising from operating activities		
Operating deficit on ordinary activities for the year	(45,881)	(1,281,387)
Depreciation	263,967	274,512
Change in debtors	(9,306)	18,625
Change in creditors	(1,384,790)	597,273
Non-cash long-term loan movement	–	–
Non-cash pension adjustment	(51,000)	(143,000)
Cash outflow arising from operating activities	(1,227,010)	(533,977)
Cash flows from investment activities		
Purchase of fixed assets	(130,736)	(202,296)
Proceeds from the sale of fixed assets	8,670	771,000
Purchase of investments	(507,211)	(701,910)
Sale of investments	3,556,240	757,120
Net cash used in investment activities	2,926,963	623,914
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents	1,699,953	89,937
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	5,768,630	5,678,693
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	7,468,583	5,768,630

The notes on pages 104 to 117 form part of these financial statements

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 December 2024

1 Accounting Policies

- (a) These accounts have been prepared in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard 102 ("FRS 102"). The accounts have been prepared under historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant notes to the financial statements.

Trade Unions are governed by the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation Act) 1992 Amended. Under that Act the accounts of Trade Unions are required to give a true and fair view. As a Trade Union is not a company the Regulations that form the basis of disclosures under FRS102 have been adapted as considered necessary to ensure the accounts give a true and fair view to the members of the Trade Union.

The Union is a public benefit entity.

The financial statements have been prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the Union. The monetary amounts of these financial statements are rounded to the nearest pound. Income and expenditure is dealt with in the various fund accounts of the union.

- (b) The obligation to prepare these financial statements on a going concern basis has been considered by reference to budgets, forecasts and projected cash flows, as well as potential opportunities in relation to the controlled realisation of assets owned by the Union if required.
- (c) Fixed assets are initially recorded at cost. Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets, except for freehold land, on a straight line basis, at rates estimated to write off the cost or valuation of each asset over its expected useful life.

The rates used are:

Buildings	2.50%
Computer equipment	25%
Fixtures or fittings	10% or 20%
Motor vehicles	25%

No depreciation is provided on freehold land. Where no information is available as to the allocation of the original cost or valuation of property between land and buildings, best estimates of that allocation are used.

- (d) Rental payments in respect of operating leases are charged to the general fund income and expenditure account in the period in which they are incurred. Assets held under finance leases and hire purchase contracts are capitalised and depreciated over the shorter period of the lease and the useful economic lives of the assets. The finance charges are allocated over the period of the lease and are charged to the income and expenditure account.
- (e) Investments are stated in the balance sheet on the following basis:
- Quoted investments - at fair value, which is determined by reference to the quoted market price at the year end date.
 - Unquoted investments – at original cost or current value as determined by, either an independent third party or by the next asset value per share as approved by the board of the bank (Unity Trust Bank).

Provision is made against investments where there is a permanent impairment in value. Income from the investments is recognised when the monies are received. Movements in the fair value of investments are included in the Statement of Comprehensive Income.

- (f) Contributions include those amounts receivable from members in respect of the year. Amounts due to be received at the balance sheet date, either by direct debit or from fire brigades who offer a payroll deduction scheme on behalf of the union, are included within Trade debtors.
- (g) Members can elect to become a member of the Accident and injury fund (AIF). AIF contributions are recognised on an accrual basis in accordance with union rules. Provisions for expenditure are included in the financial statements when there is certainty that a future payment will be made as at the balance sheet date.
- (h) All union learning fund grant income is recognised as and when the union has entitled to the monies as specified through our grant contracts.
- (i) Lottery income and expenditure are recognised on an accrual basis and the funds carried forward will be spent on good causes as determined by the lottery distribution panel.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

1 Accounting Policies (continued)

For the year ended 31 December 2024

- (j) Members' legal expenses are charged in these accounts net of reimbursements obtained in respect of certain cases, on an invoiced basis. No provision is made for outstanding legal costs not invoiced, or for reimbursements not received at the balance sheet date. All other income and expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis.
- (k) Provisions for future expenditure are included in the accounts, only where the union has a present obligation to meet such expenditure.
- (l) Provision is only made for material corporation tax on investment income and capital gains arising in the year after relief given for provident benefits paid.
- (m) Value added tax (VAT) is only partially recoverable. The recoverable element is shown separately in the income statement. All expenditure is shown inclusive of VAT where applicable.
- (n) Corporation tax is payable on the excess of interest income, rental income and chargeable gains arising on the disposal of properties and investments over expenditure on the provident benefits and reinvested chargeable gains for the year.

Provident benefits comprise of payments as set out in the rules of the Union, which relate to death benefit and legal assistance, and a proportion of the costs of administering the Union in relation to those benefits.

Deferred tax liabilities are generally recognised for all timing differences and deferred tax assets are recognised to the extent that it is probable that they will be recovered against the reversal of deferred tax liabilities or other future taxable income. Deferred tax is calculated at the tax rates that are expected to apply in the period where the liability is settled or the asset is realised. Deferred tax is charged or credited in the income and expenditure account.

- (o) Financial assets are recognised in the Union's balance sheet when the Union becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. Financial assets are classified into specified categories. The classification depends on the nature and purpose of the financial assets and is determined at the time of recognition.

Basic financial assets, which include trade and other receivables and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest.

Financial assets, other than those held at fair value through the income and expenditure account, are assessed for indicators of impairment at each reporting end date.

- (p) Basic financial liabilities, including trade and other payables, are initially recognised at the transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction.
- (q) The transactions of the regions during the period are included in these accounts as are the net assets held directly by them at the balance sheet date.
- (r) The union's pension schemes are defined benefit schemes.

The amounts charged to the income and expenditure account are the current service costs. Remeasurement comprising of actuarial gains and losses and the return on scheme assets are recognised immediately in other comprehensive income.

The assets of the schemes are held separately from those of the union in separate trustee administered funds. Pension scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method and a discounted rate equivalent to the current rate of return on high quality corporate bonds of equivalent currency and term to the scheme liabilities.

- (s) The preparation of financial statements requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise its judgement in the process of applying the accounting policies selected for use by the union. The areas involving a higher degree of judgement or complexity, or areas where assumptions and estimates are significant to the consolidated financial statements are as follows:
 - Investments – quoted investments are disclosed at market value at the Statement of Financial Position date. Unquoted investments are disclosed at their original cost or current value as determined by, either an independent third party or by the next asset value per share as approved by the board of the bank (Unity Trust Bank).

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

1 Accounting Policies (continued)

For the year ended 31 December 2024

- Defined benefit pension scheme - the cost of each of the defined benefit pension schemes is determined using an actuarial valuation. The actuarial valuation involves making assumptions about discount rates, future salary increases, mortality rates and future pension increases. Due to the complexity of the valuation, the underlying assumptions and the long term nature of these plans, such estimates are subject to significant uncertainty. In determining the appropriate discount rate, management considers the interest rates of corporate bonds in the respective currency with at least AA rating, with extrapolated maturities corresponding to the expected duration of the defined benefit obligation. The underlying bonds are further reviewed for quality, and those having excessive credit spreads are removed from the population bonds on which the discount rate is based, on the basis that they do not represent high quality bonds. The mortality rate is based on publicly available mortality tables for the specific country. Future salary increases and pension increases are based on expected future inflation rates. Further details are given in note 12.

Use of available information and application of judgement are inherent in the formation of estimates. Actual outcomes in the future could differ from such estimates. In preparing these financial statements, the union has made the following judgements:

- Under HMRC rules affecting the taxation of trade unions, a corporation tax liability does not arise on chargeable gains arising from the disposal of properties and investments where such gains are reinvested into other chargeable assets in the same accounting period. The Union has adopted a policy whereby such chargeable gains are all reinvested, thereby eliminating any corporation tax liability. Where the proceeds are not fully reinvested, no corporation tax liability is considered likely to arise due to the availability of sufficient excess expenditure on provident benefits. Accordingly, in the opinion of the management, the revaluation of properties and investments does not give rise to a deferred tax liability.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 December 2024

	2024 £	2023 £
2 Benefits		
Legal fees	924,482	1,256,086
Education	405,482	434,368
Accident and injury claims	1,472,875	1,460,736
	2,802,839	3,151,190
3 Costs of staff and lay officials		
Salaries and national insurance contributions	2,238,363	1,998,391
Pension contributions	596,840	397,606
FRS102 pension scheme adjustment (see note 12)	(51,000)	(77,000)
Officials' allowance	602,286	586,994
PAYE agreement	400	400
Trade union leave	737,177	1,102,045
	4,124,066	4,008,436
4 Member representation		
Travel	280,425	309,345
Mileage	206,582	257,108
Hotels	318,967	390,076
Subsistence and evening meals	248,411	304,582
Motor expenses	6,727	6,577
Other organising expenses	32,888	29,927
Reports, journals and subscriptions	47,332	80,854
Ballot expenses	116,922	139,611
Donations	119,894	51,912
Goods for presentations and campaigning	93,112	213,145
Communications	430,833	389,064
Computer Support	767,164	673,616
Printing and stationery	305,457	217,626
Advertising	12,455	12,689
National Joint Council Contribution	8,704	52,221
	2,995,873	3,128,353
5 Premises		
Repairs and Renewals	38,326	49,465
Office expenses	495,351	597,540
Insurance	39,033	38,779
	572,710	685,784
6 Other expenditure		
Bank charges and interest payable	9,884	7,166
Audit, pension audit and accountancy	68,395	66,390
Professional fees	730,700	734,726
	808,979	808,282

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 December 2024

7 Taxation

Current

The union is not liable to tax on income from its members. Taxation is payable to the extent that investment income and capital gains exceeded allowable provident benefits.

Deferred Tax (see note 13)

Unrealised valuation increases relating to investments would potentially give rise to chargeable gains on the sale of the asset, but any potential liability to tax is eliminated if the proceeds of sale are reinvested in other chargeable assets used for provident purposes. The tax on any proceeds which are not reinvested is reduced by indexation allowances and any balance can also be offset against expenditure on provident benefits. Deferred tax has not been provided for potential chargeable gains because the Union is satisfied that proceeds of the sale of all related assets can be substantially reinvested, sufficient that any remaining balance can be offset against allowance or expenses. Therefore, no unrealized gain at 31 December 2024 is expected to give rise to a liability to tax

	Land & buildings £	Fixtures fittings & equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Total £
8 Fixed assets				
Cost				
At 1 January 2024	3,306,583	1,574,610	163,072	5,044,265
Additions	–	130,737	(1)	130,736
Disposals	–	–	(95,898)	(95,898)
At 31 December 2024	3,306,583	1,705,347	67,173	5,079,103
Depreciation				
At 1 January 2024	1,430,955	1,163,110	154,462	2,748,527
Charge for the year	64,469	191,185	8,313	263,967
Disposals	–	–	(95,605)	(95,605)
At 31 December 2024	1,495,424	1,354,295	67,170	2,916,889
Net book value				
At 31 December 2024	1,811,159	351,052	3	2,162,214
Net book value				
At 31 December 2023	1,875,628	411,500	8,610	2,295,738

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 December 2024

9 Investments

	2024 £	2023 £
Quoted investments and unit trusts (note 9a)	3,360,891	6,155,985
Unquoted equities (note 9b)	2,071,730	1,202,930
Fair value of total investments	5,432,621	7,358,915

a) Quoted equities and unit trusts

	2024 £	2023 £
Market value at 1 January 2024	6,155,985	5,799,190
Additions	418,748	701,910
Disposal proceeds	(3,556,240)	(757,120)
Cash movement	88,463	–
Change in fair value of investments	253,935	412,005

Market value at 31 December 2024

3,360,891	6,155,985
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All investments related to quoted investments on readily accessible markets, primarily the London Stock Exchange. Investment are carried at fair value, being the market value at the year end. Asset sales and purchases are recognised at their transaction value. The main investment risk lies in the combination of uncertain investment markets and volatility in yield. The union manages these risks by retaining expert advisors.

b) Unquoted equities

	2023 £	2022 £
Market value at 1 January 2024	1,202,930	1,041,440
Surplus on revaluation of financial assets to fair value	868,800	161,490

Market value at 31 December 2024

2,071,730	1,202,930
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Historical cost at 31 December 2024

240,530	240,530
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Unquoted shares held by the union at the year end are broken down as follows:
 235,500 Unity Trust plc "A" ordinary shares
 530 Labour Education, Rec. and Holiday Homes Ltd shares held at cost of £1/share
 No provision for permanent impairment in value of investments is considered necessary.

10 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Membership debtors	727,330	625,160
Other debtors	13,085	19,178
Prepayments	221,323	308,094
	961,738	952,432

11 Current liabilities

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	634,702	851,279
Other creditors	235,592	113,322
Accruals	1,486,914	2,777,397
	2,357,208	3,741,998

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 December 2024

12 Defined benefit pension fund

The union operates two defined benefit pension schemes in the United Kingdom.

1. FBU Pension Scheme.
2. The Fire Brigades Union Retirement and Death Benefits Scheme.

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
1. FBU Pension Scheme		
Opening balance	1,860	(306)
Current service cost	(111)	(113)
Past service cost	(250)	–
Administration expenses	(199)	(229)
Contributions by the union	523	419
Group transfer from The Fire Brigades Union Retirement and Death Benefits Scheme	–	2,140
Total service cost	(37)	2,217
Net interest cost	88	66
Actuarial gain/(loss)	1,586	(117)
Closing balance	3,497	1,860
2. The Fire Brigades Union Retirement and Death Benefits Scheme		
Opening balance	–	35
Current service cost	–	(19)
Contributions by the union	–	30
Settlements	–	(581)
Group transfer to FBU Pension Scheme	–	(2,140)
Total service cost	–	(2,710)
Net interest credit	–	27
Actuarial gain	–	2,648
Closing balance	–	–
Both schemes		
Opening balance	1,860	(271)
Current service cost	(111)	(132)
Past service cost	(250)	–
Administration expenses	(199)	(229)
Contributions by the union	523	449
Settlements	–	(581)
Total service cost	(37)	(493)
Net interest cost	88	93
Actuarial gain	1,586	2,531
Closing balance	3,497	1,860

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 December 2024

12 Defined benefit pension fund (continued)

1. FBU Pension Scheme

The major assumptions used by the actuary for the FBU Pension Scheme.

		At 31.12.2024	At 31.12.2023
Rate of increase in salaries		2.9%	2.8%
Rate of increase for deferred pensioners		2.9%/2.5%	2.8%/2.5%
Discount rate		5.6%	4.5%
Rate of increase of pensions in payment	RPI increasing	3.2% max 5%	3.1% max 5%
	CPI increasing	2.9%	2.8%

The mortality assumptions are in accordance with the S3PA CMI 2023 (1.25%).

The assets in the scheme and the expected rate of return for the FBU Pension Scheme.

	% of total Scheme assets	Value at 31.12.2023 £'000	% of total Scheme assets	Value at 31.12.2022 £'000
Cash	1%	135	1%	103
Annuities	29%	4,992	33%	5,708
Cash accumulation policy	40%	6,875	38%	6,585
Funds	30%	5,369	28%	4,793
Total market value of assets		<u>17,371</u>		<u>17,189</u>

2. The Fire Brigades Union Retirement and Death Benefit Scheme

On 15 March 2023 The Fire Brigade Union Retirement and Death Benefit Scheme (FBURDBS) merged with the FBU Pension Scheme. On this day both the assets and liabilities were transferred to the FBU Pension Scheme.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 December 2024

12 Defined benefit pension fund (continued)

The amounts recognised in the statement of financial position are as follows:

	2024 FBU pension scheme £'000	2024 FBU RDB scheme* £'000	2024 Total £'000	2023 FBU pension scheme £'000	2023 FBU RDB scheme* £'000	2023 Total £'000
Present value of defined benefit obligation	(13,874)	–	(13,874)	(15,329)	–	(15,329)
Fair value of scheme assets	17,371	–	17,371	17,189	–	17,189
Net liability recognised	3,497	–	3,497	1,860	–	1,860

The amounts recognised in the income and expenditure account are as follows:

Current service costs	111	–	111	113	19	132
Past service costs	250	–	250	–	–	–
Administration expenses	199	–	199	229	–	229
Net interest credit	(88)	–	(88)	(66)	(27)	(93)
Total recognised	472	–	472	276	(8)	268
Actual return on scheme assets	416	–	416	1,120	2,665	3,785

The amounts recognised in other comprehensive income:

Actuarial (losses)/gains	1,665	–	1,665	(557)	–	(557)
Return on assets (excluding interest income)	(352)	–	(352)	440	2,573	3,013
Experience losses arising on the plan liabilities	273	–	273	–	75	75
Total recognised	1,586	–	1,586	(117)	2,648	2,531

* The Fire Brigades Union Retirement and Death Benefits Scheme

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 December 2024

12 Defined benefit pension fund (continued)

Reconciliation of opening and closing balances of the present value of scheme liabilities:

	2024 FBU pension scheme £'000	2024 FBU RDB scheme* £'000	2024 Total £'000	2023 FBU pension scheme £'000	2023 FBU RDB scheme* £'000	2023 Total £'000
Scheme liabilities at 1 January	15,329	–	15,329	7,949	6,579	14,528
Current service cost	111	–	111	113	19	132
Past service cost	250	–	250	–	–	–
Interest cost	680	–	680	614	65	679
Contributions by scheme participants	101	–	101	109	4	113
Settlements	–	–	–	–	400	400
Transfer	–	–	–	6,949	(6,949)	–
Actuarial (gain)/loss	(1,938)	–	(1,938)	557	(75)	482
Benefits paid	(659)	–	(659)	(962)	(43)	(1,005)
Scheme liabilities at 31 December	13,874	–	13,874	15,329	–	15,329

Reconciliation of opening and closing balances of the fair value of scheme assets

Fair value of scheme assets at 1 January	17,189	–	17,189	7,643	6,614	14,257
Interest income	768	–	768	680	92	772
Expenses	(199)	–	(199)	(229)	–	(229)
Actuarial (loss)/gain	(352)	–	(352)	440	2,573	3,013
Contributions by employer	523	–	523	419	30	449
Settlements	–	–	–	–	(181)	(181)
Transfer	–	–	–	9,089	(9,089)	–
Contributions by scheme participants	101	–	101	109	4	113
Benefits paid	(659)	–	(659)	(962)	(43)	(1,005)
Scheme assets at 31 December	17,371	–	17,371	17,189	–	17,189

* The Fire Brigades Union Retirement and Death Benefits Scheme

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 December 2024

12 Defined benefit pension fund (continued)

FBU Pension Scheme

The most recently completed actuarial valuation of the scheme as at 30 June 2022 showed a scheme funding deficit of £369,000. The union agreed to pay annual contributions of 23% of members' pensionable salaries, less the amount contributed by active members of the scheme each year. In respect of the deficit in the Scheme as at 30 June 2022, the Union has agreed to pay £128,000 to 30th September 2026. In addition, the Union will pay £114,000 per annum to cover administration expenses and premiums for death in service lump sums associated with the Scheme. This excludes the levies payable to the Pension Protection Fund (PPF) which the Union pays directly. The Union therefore expects to pay around £521,000 to the Scheme during the accounting year beginning 1 January 2024.

The Fire Brigades Union Retirement and Death Benefits Scheme

The most recently completed actuarial valuation as at 31 October 2020 showed a scheme funding deficit of £787,000 and the union had agreed with the trustees that it would pay 77.8% of pensionable earnings in respect of the cost of accruing benefits. This includes an allowance to cover standard administration and management fees that are deducted annually from the scheme's assets. In addition, the union paid amounts into the scheme equal to the levy payments made by the scheme to the Pension Protection Fund. Insurance premiums for death in service benefits and any fees other than standard policy charges are also payable in addition as and when they are due. The member contributions were payable in addition at a rate of 15% of pensionable salary. On 15 March 2023 this scheme merged with The FBU Pension Scheme, the net assets of the scheme of £2,140,000 were transferred on this date and the FBU Pension Scheme assumed the assets and liabilities of this scheme.

13 Contingent Liability (as explained in note 7)

As explained in note 13, no tax liabilities are expected to arise on the realization of unrealised valuation increases on investments. If the unrealised valuation increases at 31 December 2024 were all to give rise to chargeable gains the maximum liability to tax would be £679,403 (2023: £343,447).

14 Operating leases

As at 31 December 2024 the union has future commitments under non-cancellable operational leases as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Within one year	112,933	219,572
Between two and five years	20,842	137,947
Total	133,774	357,519

Operating leases relating to land and buildings amounted to £76,813 (2022 – £69,120) and operating leases relating to other activities amounted to £280,706 (2022 – £416,195).

15 Key management personnel

Key management and personnel compensation of £497,363 (2023 – £424,130) was paid in the year, comprising salary, benefits in kind, employer national insurance contributions, employer pension contributions and allowances. See analysis of officials' salaries and benefits for a further breakdown of key management personnel compensation

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 December 2024

16 Lottery

	2024 £	2023 £
Income	259,312	264,275
Expenditure		
Prizes and administration	127,252	127,883
Good causes	185,388	193,084
	312,640	320,967
Deficit for the year	(53,328)	(56,692)
Funds at beginning of the year	88,962	145,654
Funds at the end of the year	35,634	88,962

The surplus carried forward funds are to be spent on good causes.

Good causes	2024 £
University of Central Lancashire	FBU Research Project; Mental Health of UK Firefighters PHD student support
Consultancy Fees	Fire Policy Research
Consultancy Fees	Remembrance Website
Consultancy Fees	Red Plaque Website
Donation	Essex Firefighter memorial project
Donation	Mark Keefe following a medical emergency
Red plaque	Bob Smith & Paul Parkin
Red Plaque	Bob Crampin & Keith Marshall
Red plaque	Roderick Nicolson
Red plaque	Daniel Michael O'Donovan
Red plaque	Wesley Orr
Red plaque	Henry 'Harry' Stafford Colebourn
Red plaque	Richard Peacock
Red plaque	All Firefighters Plaque
Red Plaque	Ian Cameron
Red plaque	Roderick MacLeod
Red plaque	Barry Martin
Red plaque	Firefighters who gave their lives in Covent Garden Fire in 1974
Red plaque	Robert Miller
Red plaque	Cyril George Dutton
Red plaque	Catering
Red plaque	Remembrance Wreaths
Red plaque	Brochure
Red plaque	Orders of Service
	185,388

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 December 2024

17 Statement of Comprehensive Income – 2023

	Note	General fund £	Accident and injury fund £	Political fund £	Lottery fund £	Union learning fund £	2023 £
Income							
Contributions	1(f)	9,637,368	1,449,891	243,774	–	–	11,331,033
Investment Income		239,132	–	–	–	–	239,132
Grants and donations		–	–	–	–	54,817	54,817
Other Income	16	–	–	11,000	264,275	–	275,275
Commission received		16,265	–	–	–	–	16,265
VAT recoverable		9,581	–	–	–	–	9,581
		<u>9,902,346</u>	<u>1,449,891</u>	<u>254,774</u>	<u>264,275</u>	<u>54,817</u>	<u>11,926,103</u>
Expenditure							
Benefits	2	1,690,454	1,460,736	–	–	–	3,151,190
Conferences		310,903	–	69,170	–	–	380,073
Affiliations		170,864	–	51,570	–	–	222,434
'Firefighter'		264,606	–	–	–	–	264,606
Commissions		15,237	15,238	7,618	–	–	38,093
Union learning costs		–	–	–	–	(9,240)	(9,240)
Staff and officials	3	3,676,970	240,000	27,409	–	64,057	4,008,436
Member representation	4	3,120,959	–	7,394	–	–	3,128,353
Premises	5	685,784	–	–	–	–	685,784
Other expenditure	6	801,886	–	6,396	–	–	808,282
Depreciation	1(c)	274,512	–	–	–	–	274,512
Lottery good causes and prizes	16	–	–	–	320,967	–	320,967
Defined benefit net interest cost	12	(66,000)	–	–	–	–	(66,000)
		<u>10,946,175</u>	<u>1,715,974</u>	<u>169,557</u>	<u>320,967</u>	<u>54,817</u>	<u>13,207,490</u>
Operating (deficit)/surplus		(1,043,829)	(266,083)	85,217	(56,692)	–	(1,281,387)
Non-operating income and expenditure							
Surplus on disposal of fixed assets		734,512	–	–	–	–	734,512
Surplus on revaluation of quoted investments	9(a)	412,005	–	–	–	–	412,005
Surplus on revaluation of unquoted investments	9(b)	161,490	–	–	–	–	161,490
Surplus/(deficit) for the year before taxation		264,178	(266,083)	85,217	(56,692)	–	26,620
Surplus/(deficit) for the year after taxation		264,178	(266,083)	85,217	(56,692)	–	26,620

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 December 2024

17 Statement of Comprehensive Income – 2023 (continued)

	Note	General fund £	Accident and injury fund £	Political fund £	Lottery fund £	Union learning fund £	2023 £
Other comprehensive income							
Actuarial loss on post employment benefit obligations		(1,100,000)	–	–	–	–	(1,100,000)
Return on assets less net interest		3,013,000	–	–	–	–	3,013,000
Experience gains		75,000	–	–	–	–	75,000
Total other comprehensive income	12	1,988,000	–	–	–	–	1,988,000
Total comprehensive income/(expense) for the year		2,252,178	(266,083)	85,217	(56,692)	–	2,014,620

ANALYSIS OF OFFICIALS' SALARIES AND BENEFITS

For the year ended 31 December 2024

Salaries

Name	Office held	Gross salary £	Other Payment £	Total £	Equivalent rank	
Matt Wrack	General secretary	94,889	–	94,889	Area manager	Competent “B”
Ben Selby	Assistant general secretary	90,350	–	90,350	Area manager	Competent “B”
Riccardo la Torre	National officer	88,417	–	88,417	Group manager	Competent “B”

Note: All national officials' salaries are in line with fire service ranks, endorsed by annual conference.

Benefits

Name	Office held	Employer's N.I. cons. £	Employer's pension cons. £	Benefits in kind £
Matt Wrack	General secretary	11,710	25,166	7,017
Ben Selby	Assistant general secretary	11,018	11,790	–
Riccardo la Torre	National officer	9,601	9,988	5,700

Full time officials pay 9% of pensionable salary in employee pension contributions.

Salaries

Name	Office held	Gross salary £	Equivalent rank	
Tam McFarlane	National officer	62,582	Group manager	Competent “B”
Mark Rowe	National officer	65,953	Group manager	Competent “B”

MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

For the year ended 31 December 2024

Benefits

Name	Office held	Officials' allowance	Benefits in kind
		rate per annum £	£
I. Murray	President	13,155	4,890
S. Wright	Executive council and vice-president	8,333	–
J. Quinn	Executive council and national treasurer	8,333	–

The following executive council Members were paid an officials' allowance at the rate of £7,025 per annum. For the year 2024 this included the officials listed below. Individuals may not have received the full annual allowance depending upon whether they took up office, transferred office, resigned, or retired during the year.

- C. Brown
- T. Curry
- P. Smith
- A.Fox-Hewitt
- A. Taylor
- A. Scattergood
- G.Tovey
- C. Griffiths
- J. Newell
- D. Shek
- J. Weir
- V. Hampshire

The Union made reimbursement to local authorities of £737,177 (2023 – £1,102,045) in respect of trade union leave in connection with trade union duties by executive council members and regional officials.

OTHER OFFICIAL ALLOWANCES

For the year ended 31 December 2024

The FBU pays an allowance at the rate of £5,344 per annum to regional officials and to secretaries of national sections. For the year 2024 this included the officials listed below. Individuals may not have received the full annual allowance depending upon whether they took up office, transferred office, resigned, or retired during the year.

R. Bateman	S. Hart	J. Lambe	G. O'Neill	A. Sproul
G. Beeton	I. Hibbert	R. Lewington	D. Pike	M. Starkey
CD. Blayney	S. Hitchins	A. Malde	H. Powell	D. Stewart-Ball
P. Carberry	B. Holland	G. Marshall	P. Revill	M. Stilwell
M. Chapman	D. Howe	J. McKenzie	R. Richardson	G. Thomas
K. Driver	S. Howley	P. Millar	D. Roberts	P. Trayner
E. Fox	C. Hudson	A. Mills	F. Rooney	D. Turner
TP. Green	J. Hunter	L. Newport	C. Saunderson	K. Wager
B. Harris	C. Kemp	M. Nicholls	A. Shaw	S. Young

The FBU pays an allowance at the rate of £1,700 per annum to brigade officials and to chairs of national sections. For the year 2024 this included the officials listed below. Individuals may not have received the full annual allowance depending upon whether they took up office, transferred office, resigned, or retired during the year.

L. Akers	AP. Corben	R. Hastings	J. Lee	GD. Sinclair
M. Alexander	GE. Cotton	N. Hays	KC. LeGall	A. Smith
W. Anderson	A. Davidson	J. Hayton	S. Leroux	S. Smith
N. Anderson	A. Dempsey	AJ. Hemmings	J. Leslie	P. Smith
BO. Ashton	MJ. Dowthwaite	S. Herbert	DR. Lloyd	AC. Smith
M. Bairstow	MA. Drinkwater	M. Herrin	D. Lock	L. Smith
IG. Ballantyne	J. Drinkwater	A. Hills	R. Maddams	RB. Strother
D. Barrett	E. Duncan	C. Hodgkin	N. Marvin	N. Stuart
DP. Barrett	S. Eade	PJW. Horner	S. Mattinson	C. Tapp
D. Bartley	C. Edgely	M. Hoyle	ME. McKnight	DG. Taylor
R. Beeby	MW. Edwards	DA. Hull	R. McLaren	KJ. Thomas
N. Bevan	C. Elson	D. Hunt	SL. Miller-Hodges	M. Thompson
RJ. Binks	A. Faizy	J. Hunt	D. Morris	S. Tucker
NJ. Bourke	D. Fathers	L. Hunter	S. Morris	RG. Uden
AJ. Boyle	JD. Fellows	D. Hurst	P. Mortimer	SAE. Underwood
T. Brandon	BA. Flanagan	P. James	AM. Moss	PR. Volant
H. Brant	A. Fletcher	P. Johnston	A. Muir	M. Wager
O. Burrow	AM. Fookes	B. Jones	A. Murray	D. Waller
WR. Burt	R. Fortune	K. Jones	MJ. Murt	T. Wass
N. Cane	M. Fryer	GT. Jones	DD. O'Brien	S. Weir
NB. Cain	AD. Fulton	A. Jones	D. Pauffley	J. Wharnsby
C. Carter	KE. Game	J. Kaye	I. Poe	A. Whitehead
DL. Carter	M. Gardener	J. Kearns	R. Pollock	K. Wilkie
R. Cartwright	CJ. Goode	BS. Kelly	P. Reed	JA. Wilson
R. Champ	J. Goodfellow	JJ. Kelly	D. Ricketts	B. Woodhouse
LG. Clark	CM. Grantham	KAM. Kelly	GL. Roberts	C. Wycherley
P. Cole	B. Gwyer	J. Kennedy	V. Robinson	K. Yhnell
S. Collins	DM. Habberjam	K. Keuneke	S. Rule	D. Young
T. Connolly	SJ. Harding	GP. Kitchen	AC. Savory	
GD. Cook	N. Hardy	P. Kosla	M. Senior	
MJ. Cook	S. Harris	GJ. Lawes	VH. Shaw	
CR. Cook	M. Harriss	D. Lawrie	J. Shuker	

SECTION N

OBITUARY

The executive council records with deep regret the deaths of the following members in 2024:

Name	Region	Brigade
Leanne Carr	1	Scotland
Craig Christie	1	Scotland
James Dalton	1	Scotland
Glenn Kenneth Campbell	1	Scotland
Mark McCuish	1	Scotland
Stephen Barr	2	Northern Ireland
Kurtis Robinson	2	Northern Ireland
Ian Ball	5	Cheshire
Francois Childs	5	Greater Manchester
Alister Lee	5	Greater Manchester
Simon Poynton	6	Derbyshire
Ian Batchelor	6	Leicestershire
Gary Saville	6	Northamptonshire
Lee Braidley	6	Nottinghamshire
Laurient Flannagan	7	West Midlands
Stephen McLean	7	West Midlands
Robert Punshon	7	West Midlands
Desmond Walker	8	Mid and West Wales
Jonathan Greenslade	8	South Wales
Mervyn Housden	9	Cambridgeshire
Stephen Smith	9	Essex
Albert Folivi	10	London
Warren Friell	10	London
David Melville	10	London
Richard Peacock	10	London
Christopher Swallow	10	London
Jon Wright	12	Oxfordshire



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