

FireFighter

The magazine of the Fire Brigades Union ♦♦♦ www.fbu.org.uk

April 2012



Why growing older takes a physical
and mental toll on firefighters
See p12





Matt Wrack

Pensions – a long, hard campaign



As we go to press we have just received the news about our pension contributions for 2012-2013. The government has attacked all public sector workers by increasing employee contributions and the fire service has been no exception. Along with other unions, we have stated our opposition to this in principle.

We have also developed an evidence-based case addressing the specific features of firefighter pensions. The most significant fact is that we already pay among the highest employee contributions in either the public or the private sector – 11% for the Firefighters' Pension Scheme and 8.5% for New Firefighters' Pension Scheme members.

Our control members in the Local Government Pension Scheme in England and Wales will not see an increase in contributions until 2014 because of a different proposal to raise revenue, which consists of a one-off increase and an increase in normal pension age. In Scotland, the LGPS is being treated differently, with no clear details on this available at the moment.

Contributions

The proposals made by government last September would have meant an increase of 1.3% in contributions for most firefighters – with higher increases for officers. The actual increases are half those set out originally in most cases. Full details are provided on pages 10–11.

The union is obviously opposed to all increases in employee contributions – they are simply a way of cutting our pay and conditions package. We presented significant evidence to the government on the risk of members opting out of the schemes or choosing not to join in the first place. It has replied that this evidence has been taken into account and the proposed increases have been reduced as a result. The increases in the firefighter schemes are the lowest of any of the unfunded public sector schemes (other than the LGPS) for 2012.

Two reviews

The government has also agreed to a joint review of the risk of opt-outs before any further increases are proposed or implemented. We have spent a great deal of time and effort in discussing this review with ministers, civil servants and our employers to try to ensure it is a thorough and genuine process. Only time will tell the answer to this. But you will need to assess the progress carefully over coming months.

The second review is also important. It is a review of normal pension age (NPA) i.e. what is the appropriate NPA for employees eligible to join the firefighter scheme?

Our position is that it should be 55 and there is no case for increasing it. Indeed this would mean a reduction for those in the NFPS. The employers and government are signed up to participating in this discussion.

We will all have to monitor carefully and critically how open and genuine this process will be. We will be fighting to ensure it addresses all the operational and occupational demands facing firefighters. We have established a small working group to assist on input into the process.

Each of these reviews will report during this year and we will be able to make an assessment then of whether they have been genuine and to what extent we have been able to influence them. Speaking to firefighters around the country I know the vast majority of our members are very confident of our arguments on these

key issues. Our aim will be to ensure that we are able to provide further and stronger evidence to support our case.

Keep a careful eye on what is happening

We do not know exactly what the government will do at any stage of these discussions. We do not currently know whether these two reviews will produce any improvements. We shall not know that until the process is under way – and probably not until reports are produced. But we are confident that the evidence so far supports our case. We shall be battling to ensure that evidence is heard and considered at every stage of the process.

Our starting point is that government attacks on our pension rights are unacceptable. Our members know that we are right and that the occupational and financial evidence supports our case – let alone the case for fairness and justice.

We know that our members are ready to fight. You have made that clear in meeting after meeting over the past year.

We will all need to remain alert to developments throughout the next few months. All members will need to follow this process very closely.

The executive council will be given regular reports on progress or lack of it and at any time we may need to review our position and launch that fight.

I am sure you will be ready if that becomes necessary.

We are confident that the evidence so far supports our case. We shall be battling to ensure that evidence is heard and considered at every stage of the process

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PETER MACDIARMID/GETTY IMAGES



A firefighter looks out for colleagues as they damp down smouldering undergrowth in Swinley Forest in May 2011 near Crowthorne, Berkshire. 150 firefighters from four counties were involved in controlling the fires which affected two square kilometres of the forest

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LETTERS

Sound advice and practical support

I was a member of the Fire Brigades Union for 30 years until my retirement last year.

Toward the end of my career I contacted the union several times seeking advice and support. My union reps – Bob Mould, Ian Young, Phil Coates and Alan Coates were absolutely fantastic.

They gave sound advice and also provided practical support. The accident and injury fund was also there for me when I needed it.

I wish you all the best of luck with the challenges ahead.

John Marsden, Nottinghamshire

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Meet Atlantic rowers John Haskell and Jamie Windsor



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RPI annual inflation was 3.7% in February (the latest month for which figures are available), down from 3.9% in January.



Employers warned of anger over pay freeze and squeeze

Pay

Anger and frustration is growing after two years of pay freezes, the union has warned fire service employers.

The union has tabled an “extremely modest” inflation-proofing pay claim for 2012 in line with increases in the June retail price index.

The union has also warned members that the government threat to shift away from national pay bargaining in the public sector would drive down living standards even more.

The government has, so far, restricted those threats to rises set through pay review bodies.

Chancellor George Osborne has also repeatedly said that public sector pay rises should be limited to a maximum of 1% in the two years following the pay freezes. The pay freezes followed by a pay squeeze are part of the austerity measures brought on by the near collapse of banks across the world.

FBU general secretary Matt Wrack set out the 2012 claim in a letter to the national employers’ side of the National Joint Council following preliminary discussions. The letter underlined the need for inflation-proofing to “ensure that living standards can be maintained.”

“During our discussions you have pointed to the financial difficulties facing fire and rescue authorities. We are aware

of the difficulties caused by central government policy, but we are also aware that many authorities have large, and in some cases, growing reserves.

“Firefighters and their families have suffered falling living standards as a result of two years without a pay increase.

“This is exacerbated by the high levels of inflation we have experienced over this period.

“Firefighters have demonstrated time and time again their commitment to developing a world class public service.

“They have taken on significant new challenges over the past ten years and we hope that you will recognise this by engaging positively to address this claim.”



Cheshire: members campaign against North West regional control

Union concern over controls

Control

The FBU has welcomed the announcement of £74m of central grant funding to upgrade fire service emergency command and control centres.

But the union is deeply concerned about some mergers, the creation of a regional control in the north west and cuts in emergency control staff.

It also has deep reservations about the proposed privatisation of fire control in London. London Fire Brigade has said it wants to bring in Capita, a private firm with no obvious background in running emergency fire controls. The contract is expected to be agreed in the summer with the new control in operation by 2014.

The union is calling for a halt to any further mergers or outsourcing until there has been a review of resilience standards for emergency controls.

Sharon Riley, FBU executive council member for control firefighters, said: "We're deeply concerned about the privatisation of London's control. It smacks of giving a leg up to the private sector to

help them develop expertise they don't currently have.

"Londoners are the guinea pigs to test whether the private sector can run control services. It is an incredible risk to take given the experience of the collapse of FiReControl which used private consultants and contractors at every stage.

"Fire service command and control centres are central to how the service responds to all incidents including all major emergencies. There are changes being pushed through without proper scrutiny, public consultation or debate.

"Locally self-organised control amalgamations will not necessarily deliver improved national resilience. It is not the case that the new funding is increasing the number of people available in controls as the government has claimed.

"Our command and control centres are the link between the public and firefighters. We're not call centres. We are the hub of emergency incident command which is key to delivering a safe and effective service to the public and firefighters."

SOUNDING OFF

Workers' Memorial Day 28 April

Health and safety matters, says FBU national officer Paul Woolstenholmes

Firefighters know from the increasing numbers of our brothers and sisters who have died at work in recent years that the Fire Brigades Union is absolutely vital for defending our members.

Thirty firefighters died at work in the first decade of the 21st century in the UK, including 22 at operational incidents and 17 at fires. With the pressure of cuts to the service, we know the government is putting our lives at risk.

It has never been more important to stand up for workers' safety and health. The government is launching a wave of attacks on safety regulation, enforcement and compensation, so it is more essential that firefighters make a stand on 28 April this year – Workers' Memorial Day.

Workers' Memorial Day is to:

- remember the dead – all those killed at and by work almost always by avoidable incidents or illnesses; and
- fight like hell for the living – against this government's attacks that will inevitably kill, injure, and make many more of us ill.

The FBU wants all members to do something on Workers' Memorial Day this year. For those working a shift, holding a minute's silence has been done before in many fire stations. It may be possible to have a meeting or hold a discussion on the issues.

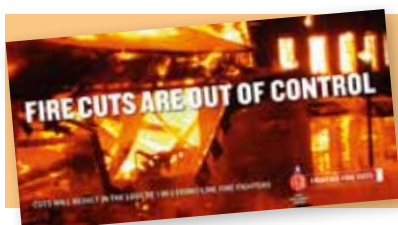
For those off duty, there are events going on around the country, which we would like members to attend. These include rallies and demonstrations with other trade unionists.

Some might prefer a more personal response, such as wearing the Workers' Memorial Day ribbon or planting a tree.

The key thing is that we do something to defend ourselves. Our health and safety matters.



See page 18 for more about the day and the TUC website address where you will find details of events.



South Yorkshire FBU took its anti-cuts campaign onto the streets using advertising vans with "FIRE CUTS ARE OUT OF CONTROL" posters. The vans were used as backdrop for TV interviews and photographs for local papers.

Publish review of wildfires, says FBU

Berkshire

Berkshire FBU has called for closer work with the union and the South East of England Wildfire Group following the major fires (*right*) in Swinley Forest, Berkshire, in May last year. The union called for the fire authority to publish its own review of fires, which needed the assistance of large numbers of other brigades.

The authority's failure to publish the review was, "regrettable" the union said. "The FBU urges the fire authority to work with it and the South East of England Wildfire Group to refine its wildfire response policy so that this varies according to the risk posed by factors including the location of the fire and weather conditions."



GETTY IMAGES

FBU women play full part at TUC

The annual TUC Women's Conference in London in March saw repeated calls for action to stop cuts to public services and pensions.

FBU delegates spoke on a range of topics. Both FBU motions highlighting fire service pension cuts, including the LGPS, and the New Woman Foundation in Egypt, were both unanimously agreed.

An informal session was chaired by the FBU national women's committee executive council member Denise Christie. A panel of experts discussed the campaign "Every Woman Safe Everywhere", set up following an initiative by Labour MP Yvette Cooper.

Delegates were very critical of coalition government cuts that are hitting women's safety, including the right to be safe at work.

Denise Christie was elected to the TUC's



JANINA STRUK

Denise Christie: re-elected to TUC women's committee

women's committee for a second year and will continue to represent the issues of the FBU at these meetings.

Further details on the NWC's Facebook page National Women's Committee of the Fire Brigades Union or on Twitter @FBUNWC

Concern and anger over cuts

Wiltshire

Wiltshire firefighters are campaigning over £1.8m of cuts which would mean a reduction in frontline firefighters and appliances and the introduction of 96-hour working at some stations.

Cuts to retained crews, which could see the loss of one in three full-time equivalent posts, along with contractual changes being demanded, mean retained firefighters are being asked to choose between their main employment, their families and working retained duty.

The plans would cut 30 whole-time firefighter posts, one in six frontline posts, leave the county with only one aerial appliance and remove all four emergency tenders. The rope and water rescue team would be halved. FBU branch secretary Brent Thornley said: "There is anger and concern about the cuts. These cuts would leave us spread too thinly to guarantee an immediate response to emergencies."

Pension uprating appeal rejected

Pension uprating

The Court of Appeal has rejected the appeal by the FBU and six other unions challenging the switch from uprating pensions in line with the retail price index to the consumer price index which is generally lower. The unions argued the move was not permitted under social security legislation.

The court ruled that the government was entitled to take into account the national economic situation. It also ruled that, even if the national economic situation had been discounted, the government would still have the adopted CPI on the basis of the advice it had received. Unions will now consider their next steps.

Percy Tinson – a job well done

Obituary

Percy Tinson, who has died aged 83, joined Derbyshire fire service control in 1948 and became involved in the union as a branch official in 1951.

He held many positions within the union and was East Midlands regional chair from 1973 until he retired in 1992. Percy was also actively involved in the regional TUC and Labour Party.

A quietly spoken man, the meticulous way he went about his business earned him a great deal of respect in the region and nationally.

He was a control staff member, although his expertise in many aspects of operational conditions of service and pensions was second to none.

It says much about the man that many of the gains and improvements he fought for would never benefit him personally. Once he retired, Percy used his experience to help others in the wider community.

He leaves his wife, Pam and son David. Our thoughts go out to them and our thanks for a job well done go to Percy.

Don Nelson



The FBU does not accept the argument that traffic is the reason for slower response times

Cuts slow response times

Response times to some house fires are now fully two minutes slower than they were a decade or so ago, according to new figures obtained by the FBU.

The Westminster government released figures on average response times for each fire and rescue service in England for the year 2010-11 on 18 January. Response times to dwelling fires are now 7.3 minutes, compared to 5.5 minutes in 1996 and 6.5 minutes in 2006.

Response times to dwelling fires where no persons were reported are now 7.5 minutes – a full two minutes slower than in the mid-1990s.

The trend in response times has also worsened in the last five years. Over the ten years after 1996, response times slowed by a minute on average.

They increased by almost the same again in the five years after 2006.

As the table indicates, response times to other building fires and road traffic collisions have also slowed, although attendance at outdoor fires has stayed the same.

FBU general secretary Matt Wrack said: "Firefighters and the public are rightly appalled that response times have slowed over the last decade. This is not the fault of firefighters.

"It's no accident that as the fire and rescue service has been cut back – as it has been under the last two governments – then attendances at fires have also slowed.

"The FBU does not accept the excuse

that traffic is the reason for slower response times. Fewer pumps and fewer firefighters mean it is impossible to mobilise as swiftly as we would like to."

Only four fire and rescue services – Norfolk, Isle of Wight, Hereford and Worcester and Surrey – have improved their response times to dwelling fires since 1996.

Some, including Northumberland, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Kent, Leicestershire, Cornwall and Shropshire, are significantly slower.

Wrack said: "Of course these figures are averages and they mask huge variation from incident to incident. But the basic trend is clear – response times are slower and this is because of cuts."

Figures from Northern Ireland bear this out. Average response times have remained the same for years, along with the same numbers of firefighters.

He added: "The answer is to stop the cuts and negotiate with the FBU for national response standards, to ensure the public receive the high quality fire and rescue service they deserve."

RESPONSE TIMES	1996	2010-11	Slowdown %
Dwelling fire	5.5	7.3	33
Other building fires	5.7	8.0	40
Vehicle fires	6.7	9.1	36
Outdoor fires	9.7	9.7	0

Sources: FBU, It's about time report; Hansard, 18 January 2012 810W

VIEW

FROM THE
AERIAL LADDER
PLATFORM



Health secretary Andrew Lansley was confronted outside Downing Street by retired NHS union rep June Hautot in February

PICTURE: MIKE KEMP/IN PICTURES/CORBIS

Dismantling the National Health Service – it's really that bad

RON SINGER, retired GP, president, Medical Practitioners section of Unite

The Health and Social Care Bill, which is due to receive royal assent and so become law before Easter, is the biggest-ever threat to the future of the NHS in England. It is not only the traditional supporters of the NHS who say this. Almost all medical, nursing and other health professionals are saying it too.

All were prepared to engage with government at the beginning but have not been listened to. They now consider the outcome to be a complete mess. It moves the NHS away from its basic ideals in favour of privatisation and big business.

Under the cover of "handing the NHS budget to GPs so that your GP can design a service for your health needs" the truth is that clinical commissioning groups (CCGs – covering 250,000 to 500,000 people) will be overwhelmed and controlled by giant commissioning support organisations (CSOs) covering 2 million people.

These CSOs will be "hosted" by the NHS until 2016 when they will have to leave

the NHS and become part of the private sector in some form or another. Although CCGs will, in law, have their share of the NHS budget, they will have to do what the finance managers in the huge CSOs command. There will be very little local flexibility for you and me as patients.

All hospitals will have to distance themselves from the NHS and become foundation trusts – free-standing businesses making up to 49% of their income from private patients. This will push NHS patients on waiting lists to the back of the queue. Many services will have to be put out to tender or offered to "any qualified provider" under competition laws.

The NHS is being privatised in all but name.

In order to achieve this change in the NHS from a service to a business on a reducing budget, clause one of the bill severs the link between the government and its duty to provide a universal, comprehensive health service to you and

me. Clinical commissioning groups will no longer have to provide a full range of services to patients. The GP will be transformed from helper and guide to keeper of the budget and administrator of the cuts in service. GPs will be rewarded for reducing their budgets: save on referrals and your bank balance benefits.

GPs are being forced into CCGs not because they support the idea (as the government claims) but as a move to defend services to their patients.

After a professional lifetime in the NHS I know it is not perfect. I have spent many hours working with managers and other colleagues to improve services locally and nationally. The NHS just happens to be the most cost effective health service in the world, the easiest to access and it achieved its highest satisfaction rating from the public just before the coalition launched its offence against the NHS.

The NHS is in danger, needs your support and the campaign will continue.



Government announces increases in firefighter pension contributions

Firefighter explains the most recent developments in the pensions battle

The government has announced the increases in pension contribution that will come from every firefighter's pay packet this month. It has also clarified

other important matters. The Fire Brigades Union believes that, although some movement can be detected, the wider proposals are still unacceptable and much more needs to be done to address the union's concerns.

Last month the government finally published the contribution increases to be implemented from April 2012. These were less than expected – about half of what the government originally proposed in September. They will still take money from firefighters' pockets from this month. The increases from 2012-13 are indicated in the tables.

FBU general secretary Matt Wrack said: "The FBU does not accept that these contribution increases are justified. We know they are a deficit reduction measure, not one to improve

firefighters' pensions. We still fear that some firefighters will decide to opt out – particularly if the further increases threatened for next year and the year after are implemented.

"The FBU will continue to press the argument that these increases are unfair to firefighters and unworkable for public finances. The reduction in the proposed increases suggests that these arguments have been at least partially acknowledged. But it remains to be seen what the government will do next."

Contributions review

The government has agreed to undertake a review of firefighters' contribution increases for 2013-14 and 2014-15. This fire service-specific review is due to report before the end of this year and is in addition to a more general review of opt-outs across all public sector schemes.

The FBU has argued strongly that increases of 3.2% on top of firefighters' already high contributions and of up to 6% for officers will inevitably lead

to some members opting out of their pension scheme. The union also fears that new firefighters will simply not want to join a pension scheme with such high levels of contributions.

The union backed up its arguments with hard data from the YouGov survey conducted last summer. The government has simply been unable to answer the argument that one in eight members is very likely to opt out if their contributions rise so steeply.

The review provides an opportunity for the FBU and its members to restate and extend our arguments. It will now include evidence and data collected directly from fire service employers as well as simply from FBU members. The union is confident this will confirm its argument that there is already a downward trend in participation in the pension schemes.

Retire at 60

One of the comments that has been most frequently made at FBU meetings

Table 1: FPS, firefighter contribution increases 2012-13

Full time pay	Contribution rate 2012-13 (%)	Extra contributions April 2012 – March 2013 (£)	Additional cost per month April 2012 – March 2013 (£)
Wholetime firefighter	11.6	169	14
Wholetime crew manager	11.7	219	18
Wholetime watch manager	11.7	245	20
Wholetime station manager	11.8	385	32
Wholetime group manager	11.9	501	42
Wholetime area manager	12.2	777	65
Retained firefighter (modified scheme)	11.6	60	5

Table 2: NFPS, firefighter contribution increases 2012-13

Full time pay	Contribution rate 2012-13 (%)	Extra contributions April 2012 – March 2013 (£)	Additional cost per month April 2012 – March 2013 (£)
Retained firefighter (full retainer)	8.8	8	1
Retained firefighter (£10,000 pensionable pay)	8.8	30	2
Wholetime development firefighter	8.8	66	6
Wholetime firefighter	8.8	85	7
Wholetime crew manager	8.9	125	10
Wholetime watch manager	8.9	140	12

Figures are rounded and do not include tax relief. London firefighters pay more because of London weighting.

on fire stations up and down the UK is: “They can’t seriously expect us to work to 60”.

The FBU has presented substantial evidence to show that setting a new normal pension age (NPA) of 60 is simply unworkable. That is why the union has also campaigned to reduce the NPA for members of the New Firefighters’ Pension Scheme introduced from 2006.

The union has shown that whenever this matter has been reviewed seriously, with input from health and fitness experts, then working beyond 55 has been rejected.

The Home Office report by Dr Michael Haisman came to that conclusion and nothing that has occurred since gives any reason to doubt his strong conclusion.

The highly respected Institute of Occupational Medicine (IOM) examined the issue recently at the request of the FBU and confirmed that there was no clinical evidence to sustain the government’s desire to make firefighters work

longer (see pages 12-13).

The government has conceded that it should review its proposals for a higher normal pension age for those in fire service schemes.

It has agreed to do so this year and the FBU will seek to influence the process. The union is confident that if the government is prepared to look at the evidence for firefighters’ health, safety and fitness then it will have to conclude that working longer is unfeasible.

The union will therefore be collecting evidence of our own to input into the review.

We welcome suggestions from members and will be asking for comments, feedback and assistance to make sure the voice of firefighters is heard loud and clear.

Where now on pensions?

Matt Wrack said: “The pension battle is far from over. There is still much for the FBU to do to protect our members’ pensions. With the exception of the

Local Government Pension Scheme, which includes our control members, every other public sector scheme has had higher contribution increases imposed. Similarly, the new pension schemes from 2015 have been imposed on teachers, health workers and civil servants. Firefighters are not yet at that stage.

“We have won some concessions. We secured a delay on the announcement of the cost ceiling. After some hard-fought negotiation this was better than had originally been mooted, with an accrual rate and revaluation rate that together are projected to be better than elsewhere – although still not high enough for a workable scheme. There is still a lot to do.”

Wrack said: “This is not over by a long way. What members can guarantee is that this union is working as hard as we can to defend the pensions firefighters have earned through our irreplaceable work.”



The latest information on pensions is on the FBU’s website www.fbu.org.uk

Hitting you where it hurts

Health risks mean firefighters should not be made to work beyond 55

In an important development on firefighter pensions, the government has agreed to review its proposal to make firefighters retire at 60. The FBU believes that expecting firefighters to work beyond 55 is perverse, self-defeating and ultimately a threat to firefighter and public well-being.

The review is expected to publish its findings by December this year and the FBU will make sure that firefighters' voices are heard loud and clear.

FBU national officer Sean Starbuck said: "If the government is prepared to look honestly at the research around firefighters' health and safety in the twilight of our careers, then we are confident that it will find no evidence and no case for firefighters working beyond 55."

Demands

The union has already commissioned a study of recent research on ageing and the demands of firefighting by Dr Richard Graveling and Dr Joanne Crawford. This confirms the common-sense view that firefighting gets harder and harder as firefighters get older.

First, on the physical demands of the work and any heat strain experienced, the study found that: "On average, older firefighters of either gender will find the demands of being a firefighter more taxing than will their younger counterparts."

On the psychological demands of firefighting the study said: "The risks of post-traumatic stress disorder have been recognised." But there have been no studies on aging firefighters and occupational stress.

Ill-health

The review says that a few individuals may be able to meet the operational demands of firefighting

beyond 55. However: "An increasing number will suffer from health problems which will impair this ability, including (amongst many) musculoskeletal disorders (especially of the back); osteoarthritis and diabetes.

"In addition, age-related deterioration in physical fitness, muscle strength and heat tolerance will mean an increasing number will find it difficult to meet the acute challenges of firefighting, resulting either in a degradation in operational performance (older firefighters performing allotted tasks more slowly) or an increase in risk of acute injury such as severe fatigue or heat-related illness (where self-pacing is either not possible or not practised)."

In 1996, a Home Office study of age limits for serving firefighters by Dr Michael Haisman concluded that raising the current age limit for firefighters of 55 years "would result in diminishing numbers being able to meet the requirements" of being a firefighter (see *Firefighter* November/December 2011).

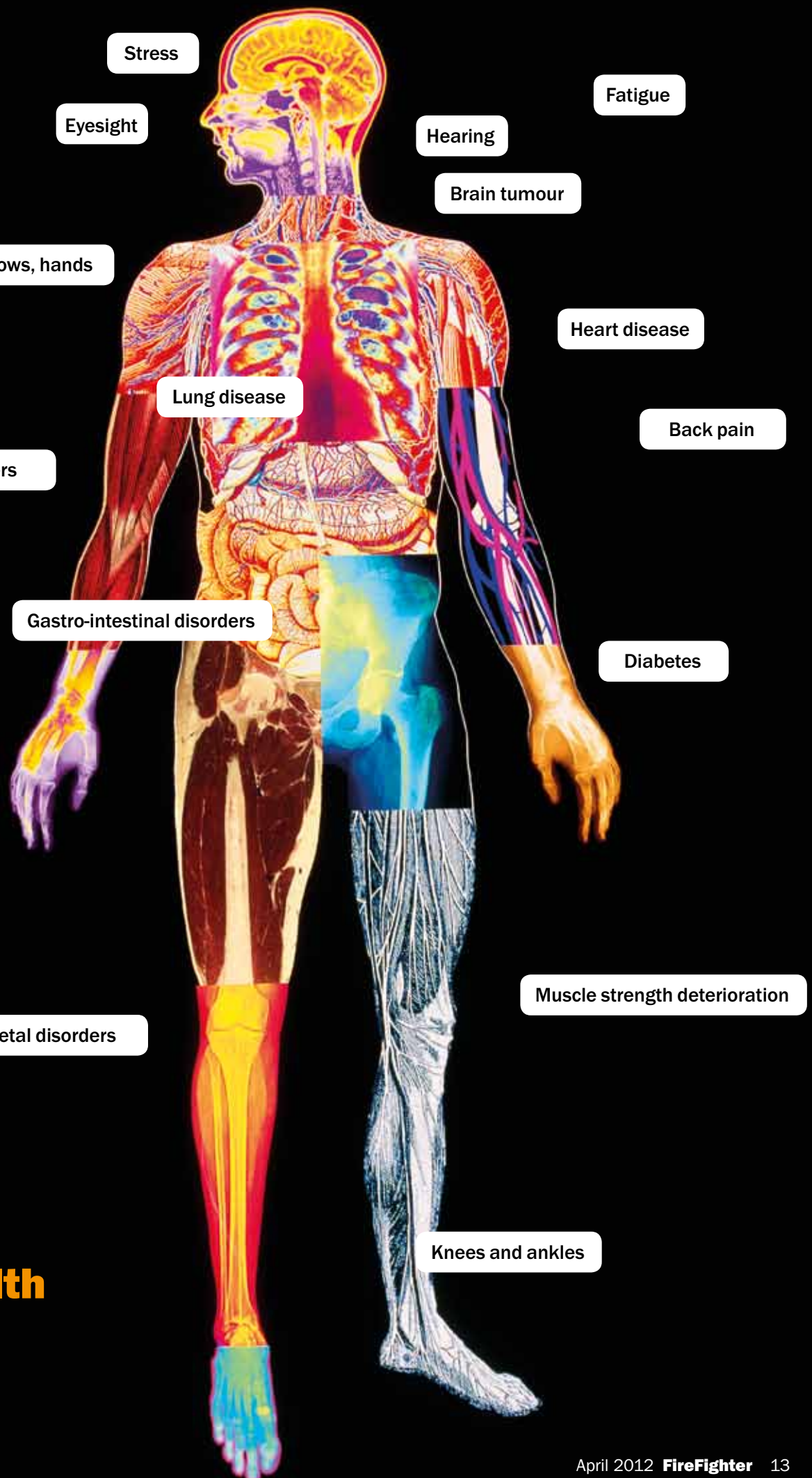
The recent review by Graveling and Crawford concluded that: "There is no evidence that the requirements in the current

service are any less taxing than they were at that time, nor that current firefighters are any better able to meet those requirements. There is therefore no apparent justification for deviating from that view".

MORE INFORMATION

Richard Graveling and Joanne Crawford, Scoping study: Review of aging and the demands of firefighting. IOM.

<http://tinyurl.com/cflseuz>



The health toll of getting older

JOBS ON THE LINE

MPs express concern over year-on-year cuts to service

MPs from across the political spectrum have warned the government of mass frontline firefighter losses and fire station closures unless it rethinks cuts in grants to fire authorities in 2013-15.

The union has warned that the cuts could lead to losses of at least 6,000 jobs across all brigades.

The figure might be even higher as many fire authorities have imposed additional cuts on themselves by freezing their council tax rises for a second year, meaning their budgets are losing ground against inflation.

FBU figures show that more than 1,000 frontline posts were lost between April 2010 and April 2011.

Central government grant cuts are planned to get worse year-on-year – so called “back-loading”. The job cuts – mostly losses through not replacing those who leave – cover wholetime and retained firefighters.

These cuts are likely to amount to a 25% reduction in grant funding between the emergency budget of 2010 through to 2015.

But Chancellor George Osborne has also flagged up further public service cuts in 2016 and 2017.

A parliamentary debate in March centred on potential losses in the six English metropolitan fire authorities outside London. Cuts in London may start to be implemented after the Olympics.

The metropolitan fire authorities outside London are warning that by 2015 there will be:

- **2,000 frontline job losses**
- **50 fire station closures**
- **loss of 100 fire engines.**

Fire authorities are now starting to echo publicly the union’s long-standing warnings of the impact of cuts – fewer firefighters taking longer to get to an incident, increasing risk to life and more property damage at fires and a poorer response to other major incidents.

The FBU warns that the fire service will reach breaking point dealing with a series of large fires or widespread incidents such as floods and wildfires. The number and size of wildfires often require hundreds of crews and appliances working around the clock for days and even weeks to control and douse them.

FBU general secretary Matt Wrack said: “Fewer fire crews means it will take longer for the fire engine to arrive in response to a 999 call. There will be ever-increasing risk to life, homes, businesses and our cultural and natural heritage as the cuts bite harder year after year.

“Claims that fire services can fall back on each other and pool resources don’t stand up when the cuts are widespread. The overall pool of resources is being drained away and it will get worse year after year.

“Cameron’s promise not to cut frontline services has proved worthless. You don’t get much more frontline than a 999 response and we’re being cut to pieces with the threat of worse to come.

“We’re overstretched now, and frontline crews are making it clear we’ll be at breaking point when the cuts really bite over the next two years. The simple fact is that cuts cost lives.”



SNAPSHOT OF LOSSES

Wiltshire – one in six wholetime posts under threat, as many as one in three retained under threat.

West Yorkshire – 102 frontline posts to go (one in 10) and 10 stations axed.

Kent – Eight fire stations closed, four new stations built.

Staffordshire – possible loss of 60 posts.

Cambridgeshire – around 60 posts under threat, loss of specialist appliances.

Greater Manchester – authority warns 200 firefighters posts could go.

Dorset – brigade secretary has warned of cuts after fire authority snubbed a plea from the chief and the chair to allow a small increase in council tax.

South Yorkshire – one in five frontline posts, four station closures, cuts to appliances.

Gloucester – appliance cuts and loss of between 24 and 36 frontline posts.

Merseyside – authority warns 150 firefighter posts could go, five station closures.

PICTURES: KEVIN HALE

Victory timeline

1947

Firefighters' Pension Scheme set up

1997

European Council directive published along with a framework agreement

2000

Part-Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations transpose the directive into UK law

2001

FBU lodges 12,000 claims at an employment tribunal on behalf of its entire membership working the retained duty system

November 2001

Employment tribunal hears evidence for nine days

February 2002

Another seven days of hearings

July 2002

ET rejects the FBU's cases, union lodges appeal

2003

Employment Appeal Tribunal rejects union's appeal, union appeals to Court of Appeal

The road to equality for retained firefighters

Compensation for years of discrimination against retained firefighters is set to make its way to thousands of crews in the next few months. The offers will see a minimum payment of £150 for those eligible, with maximum payments to firefighters of around £750 and officers of around £806.

The payments are based on the retained role held on 30 June 2010. The compensation covers payments for loss of, for example, sick pay.

Retained firefighters were excluded from any pension scheme until 2006 when access was allowed to a pension scheme of poorer quality.

Negotiations are still continuing to ensure that the pensions benefit entitlement is equivalent to the same standard as the scheme from which retained firefighters had been excluded.

The work will then begin to allow retained firefighters to satisfy their individual pension-related claims.

The payments relate to retained employment between 1 July 2000 until 30 June 2010. The formula will be based on the period of employment during that period and on the percentage of cover provided.

Firefighters and officers providing 100% cover during the entire period are eligible for the maximum payments. Lower payments will apply to other periods of employment and cover on a pro-rata basis.

The payments are the outcome of an

Compensation for discrimination set to flow from legal victory

February 2005

Court of Appeal hears case, defers judgment

June 2005

Court of Appeal partially upholds the union's appeal, FBU appeals on other points

January 2006

House of Lords hears FBU appeal over two days

March 2006

House of Lords rules by a 3-2 majority in favour of the FBU

November 2007

Cases return to employment tribunal

March 2008

Tribunal finally rules in favour of FBU

March 2012

Compensation offers go out

eight-year legal battle to secure an end to discrimination against firefighters working retained duty. On 11 March 2008 an employment tribunal found that firefighters working retained duty were discriminated against when they were denied access to a pension and the same sick pay (pro rata) as wholetime firefighters.

That decision was based on the principles set out by the House of Lords in a legal judgment in March 2006. The Law Lords dismissed attempts by fire service employers and the secretary of state to justify the discrimination in this case.

FBU assistant general secretary Andy Dark said: "This settlement is based on immensely complex and drawn out legal proceedings started in 2001. We had lost at every legal stage until we got to the House of Lords in 2006 when legal history was made.

"This case ended the practice of firefighters who had served their communities for up to 30 years being denied a pension. We are proud we have defeated the strenuous attempts of government and the employers to justify this appalling behaviour.

"The eventual employment tribunal decision was two years later in March 2008. It has been complex and difficult to turn the legal judgment into a workable compensation scheme which puts money in the pockets of retained firefighters.

"The negotiations regarding the pensions element of the case are ongoing. The conclusion of that will be reported in due course."

The case centred on 12 test cases from a total of 12,000 cases lodged at tribunal in 2000 on behalf of firefighters working retained duty across the UK.

Known as "Mathews and others", the test cases were six firefighters from Kent and six from Berkshire.

Les Chappell, now watch manager at Marden station in Kent, was one of the 12 test cases. He told *Firefighter*: "There were thousands of us involved in the legal action at the start. At that time we did not get a pension or sick pay and we were not treated equally.

"The legal process was long drawn out and I'm happy we're getting to the end. I've put my forms in and I'm waiting for the money.

"The compensation is a bit of a bonus. But the core of the case was that we wanted to be treated fairly, treated the same, to be entitled to the pension and sick pay. It was about an end to the unfairness. That is what it was about."

"We wanted to be treated fairly, treated the same. It was about an end to the unfairness"

 Details of the claims process is available at www.fbu.org.uk. Follow the P-T workers section on the right at the top

Safety at work

Join the world campaign to save lives at work

**If you are
at work on 28
April, organise
a minute's
silence**

Workers' Memorial Day, 28 April, has always been to "remember the dead, fight for the living". The Fire Brigades Union and other trade unions in the UK and internationally will be marking the day this year – which falls on a Saturday – with a host of events.

Over 1,300 people are killed every year at work in the UK. This figure includes those working on the roads, at sea and in the air, work-related suicides and members of the public killed by work activity. Up to another 50,000 people die each year from work-related diseases: about 5,000 from asbestos diseases and 20,000 from heart disease caused by stress. Over 2.3 million people are killed by work worldwide each year – more than by war.

Firefighter deaths

Thirty firefighters died at work in the first decade of the 21st century in the UK, including 22 at operational incidents and 17 at fires. The FBU has been campaigning for the government to investigate these deaths properly and to make firefighter safety a high priority. With pressure to cut the fire and rescue service, the union fears the government is putting firefighter lives at risk.

Workers' Memorial Day is commemorated throughout the world and has been officially recognised by the UK government since 2010.

Union organising

Unions are organising events and memorials to remember all

those killed through work and, at the same time, to ensure that such tragedies are not repeated. That can best be done by building trade union organisation and campaigning for stricter enforcement with higher penalties for breaches of health and safety laws.

This year unions, including the FBU, are calling on health and safety representatives, trades councils and safety campaigners to make 28 April a day of action to defend health and safety from the attacks on regulation, enforcement, cuts and refusal to tackle the massive toll that health and safety breaches take on workers.

Our health and our safety is under attack as never before

and we must defend it, for our own sake and that of future generations.

A huge number of events up and down the country are already planned – and it's not too late to organise something in your workplace or community.

What you can do

- Find out what is happening in your area on 28 April. The TUC website lists many local activities, but you can ask your branch safety rep, brigade secretary or trades council.
- If nothing is happening, then get together with some of your workmates or others in the area where you work and organise something.
- Write to your MP or local paper telling them why what the government is doing is wrong. Some ideas on what to say are on the FBU and TUC websites.
- If you are working on 28 April, organise a minute's silence in your fire station.
- Ask your council or any other public body to fly official flags at half-mast on the day. Remember that the day is officially recognised by the government.
- Arrange an event such as planting a memorial tree in a public place, putting up a plaque, dedicating a sculpture, a piece of art, or a bench, to remember workers who have been killed at the workplace or in the community.
- Ask local religious centres to include Workers' Memorial Day in their worship during the week.
- Ask local football teams and other sports to include a mention of Workers' Memorial Day in their programme for any games on the day.
- Distribute purple "forget-me-not" ribbons, the symbol of Workers' Memorial Day.

More information

- The TUC website has a list of events around the UK as well as useful resources: www.tuc.org.uk/workplace/tuc-20489-f0.cfm
- The Greater Manchester Hazards campaign website has materials, ideas and lists local events: www.gmhazards.org.uk



A 2010 United States Department of Labor poster featuring Mary Harris "Mother" Jones – the Irish-born American labour and community organiser who co-founded the Industrial Workers of the World

Legal Beagle

Will changes affect my pension rights?

FBU
FREEPHONE
LEGAL ADVICE
LINE
0808
100 6061

Q If the government changes the rules with respect to current pension entitlement, am I able to claim this is a breach of contract therefore entitling me to a full refund of my contributions?

A A firefighter's contractual right with respect to the pension scheme is set out in the contract of employment. This will typically state that there is a pension scheme in place for which the firefighter is eligible and that details of the scheme are set out in the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FPS) or the New Firefighters' Pension Scheme (NFPS) as appropriate.

In other words, your contractual right is to be a member of the scheme as opposed to a contractual right to specific benefits derived under the FPS or NFPS. If the rules of the schemes allow them to be amended then your contractual right to be a member of the FPS or NFPS has not been breached. The terms of the scheme have been varied as the rules permit.

On this basis it is not possible to argue that your employer has acted in breach of contract if the pension scheme changes and that you should be entitled to all your contributions back.

However, it is important to note that both the FPS and

NFPS are governed by public law and legal proceedings can be brought against public bodies to restrain an abuse of power.

The possible grounds for challenge include illegality, acting outside statutory powers, procedural impropriety, natural justice, bias, inconsistency, bad faith and irrationality (i.e. that no reasonable decision maker properly directing themselves could have reached the same decision). Changing the rules of the schemes is subject to scrutiny on these grounds.



SATOSHI KAMBAYASHI

of benefits which you would be entitled to had you been retired on health grounds on the date of your death.

Your child would receive a quarter of the same amount. If you have another child, the pension would be half of the same amount divided between the children.

If you die after your retirement, your partner will receive half of your pension and your child would get a quarter of it, or half would be divided between more than one child.

If you did not leave an eligible partner, your child or children would be paid an additional pension equivalent to the amount an eligible partner would have received.

It would be divided equally between the children until they cease to be eligible (aged 18, or 23 and in full-time education).

Unfortunately for FPS members, only married and civil partners have the right to inherit their pensions. The children of FPS members inherit as long as they were dependent on the member at the date of death.

Brigades also have discretion, under Rule E3, to give a gratuity to a dependent relative.

More information is contained in guidance on the Department for Communities and Local Government website: <http://tinyurl.com/d4b6wzm>

Q I am a member of the NFPS. I live with my partner and we have a child on the way. We are not married. What rights will my partner and child have to my pension should I die?

A Your pension will be paid to your partner and child whether you die before or after your retirement, as long as you have nominated them to receive your pension.

Should you die in service, your partner would be entitled to half of the higher tier level

'Ordinary people can achieve extraordinary things'

**Across the Atlantic:
3 months,
2 firefighters,
1 boat,
0 clothes**

Team Atlantic Dash

Two South Wales firefighters faced the greatest endurance test of their lives when they set out to row 3,000 miles, naked, across the Atlantic. During their epic voyage, intrepid Cardiff firefighters John Haskell and Jamie Windsor – known as “Team Atlantic Dash” – experienced weeping wounds, night terrors and 40-foot waves. They nearly capsized mid-ocean.

As *Firefighter* went to press, the pair still had donations coming in and hoped to raise over £20,000 for four charities. They have been watched by millions on a Eurosport documentary and have run “treadmill marathons” at supermarkets around South Wales, kitted out in fire kit and breathing apparatus.

The dynamic duo – John based at Ely station, Jamie at Whitchurch – came fourth in the Talisker Whiskey Atlantic Challenge, one of the world’s toughest ocean races. To protect

“We didn’t speak properly for 10 days, we were so exhausted”

themselves from the elements, they wore only factor 50 sunblock, lip salve and, when needed, sun specs and hat. But there was nothing gimmicky about rowing in the nude, says John, who still has scars on his feet from the stirrups used when rowing. “You couldn’t wear anything – even a watch – because when salty sea spray crystallises on your skin, it causes chafing, rubs red raw and gets infected”.

They had allowed 90 days to complete the journey from Tenerife to Barbados. But fair winds – including a good few hair-raising storms – meant they made it in 45 days, 19 hours and 15 minutes to be precise. As the borrowed wooden boat, emblazoned with sponsors’ logos and equipped with satnav and solar panels, neared port in Barbados, team Atlantic Dash texted: “3000 nautical miles in the bag and family, friends, paradise, rum and hot food so close.”

Much had happened in those 45 days. The pair devised a





JOHN HASKELL AND JAMIE WINDSOR

Cardiff firefighters John Haskell and Jamie Windsor hope to raise £20,000 from their row across the Atlantic where they encountered terrifying weather, injuries and exhaustion



John Haskell greets his children Megan and Morgan on his arrival in Barbados. Pictures: Brian Finke

punishing shift pattern – two hours rowing, two hours trying to sleep. They soon changed to three-hour shifts: an hour and a half's snatched sleep was just not enough, once they had eaten and wiped off sunblock. The weather turned bad as soon as Atlantic Dash set out – and stayed bad for three weeks. John, 43, recalls a gruelling ten-day stretch of huge waves and electric storms. "It was relentless. There were three days when we lived on our nerves." In one terrifying night storm "no clouds, no moon, no stars", the shift-swapping rowers "couldn't even see the end of the oars. Rogue waves were battering us from the side, you felt you'd be washed overboard any minute. You'd be on the floor, off your feet, winded. I smashed my knee to bits when an oar broke. It swelled up like a melon. Jamie broke his thumb. We were both covered in sores and missing our families. I remember crying like a baby I was in so much pain. We went to some very dark places.

"We didn't speak properly for ten days, we were so exhausted, just grunting and grimacing as we passed each other. We'd open

"Planting the Welsh flag at the South Pole would be quite something"

the cabin hatch between waves and jump in or out." When the weather was kinder, there was time to spot whales and dolphins, and, of course, bottle mid-Atlantic seawater to be raffled off later for charity.

Their video diary blog of whale-watching and much, much more has now gone global – seen by millions as part of a Eurosport documentary on the race screened in March. The team Atlantic Dash website is still getting lots of hits, there are blogs and tweets on future treadmill marathons and videos on YouTube. As *Firefighter* went to press John was hoping to raise £1,000 for a 20-minute talk at a conference in the Cardiff Millennium Centre – "less hard work than doing a treadmill marathon". He was following a quantum physicist.

John, father of Megan, nine and Morgan, six, was inspired to embrace his inner adventurer to raise money for Breast Cancer Care in recognition of the support his wife Sian received during treatment for the disease. "The disease really shakes your life up. Breast Cancer Care were fantastic, and the selfless support our family received was the catalyst for me to organise the trip." Three other charities – the Fire Fighters Charity, WRVS and Help for Heroes – are also benefitting.

So why "Atlantic Dash"? John found an inspirational poem on a website when leaving a message of condolence for two firefighters who died on duty in a high-rise in Hampshire. *The Dash*, by Linda Ellis, speaks of the "dash" between birth and death on a tombstone – and that what really matters is "how we spend our dash". "I found it very moving," John says. "It was just right for the condolences website and also a good way to live your life."

The team has won international acclaim since returning on January 20. The website promoting Eurosport's documentary, which featured four Atlantic Challenge teams, including Atlantic Dash, describes John and Jamie as "the most charismatic men ever to attempt the challenge, with an amazing encounter with a whale, captured on camera and stories of brutal waves and broken bones, all lived with humour and delight ... the perfect example of how ordinary people can achieve extraordinary things".

John is already talking about fundraising ventures in 2014, commenting: "Planting the Welsh flag at the South Pole would be quite something." No doubt we will hear more ...



Find out more about John and Jamie's adventure and how to donate to their nominated charities at www.atlanticdash.co.uk

Read *The Dash*: www.lindaellis.net

Prize quiz



Win two £50 Odeon gift cards

To win a pair of Odeon Cinema gift cards send your answers by 30 April 2012 on a postcard to: **Prize Competition (April 2012), FBU Head Office, Bradley House, 68 Coombe Road, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT2 7AE.** Please include your name, address and membership number. The winner will be selected at random from all correct entries.

1 Because The Night taken from Patti Smith's 1978 album *Easter* was co-written by whom?

- A) Bob Dylan
- B) Bruce Springsteen
- C) Billy Joel
- D) Whistling Jack Smith

2 Which Christian name, popular in Italy, is derived from a Latin word meaning 'relating to Easter'?

- A) Primo
- B) Peppino
- C) Paolo
- D) Pasquale

3 Name the original male lead of *Easter Parade* (1948 musical co-starring Judy Garland) who was replaced by Fred Astaire after breaking his ankle?

- A) Gene Kelly
- B) Donald O'Connor
- C) Bing Crosby
- D) Frank Sinatra

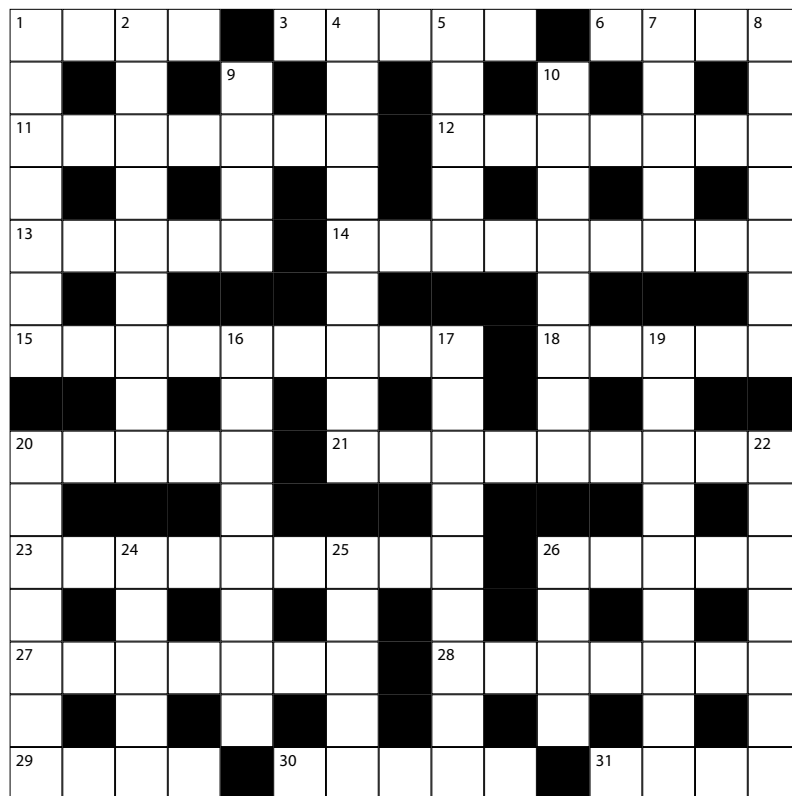


4 American author Salvatore Alberto Lombino, who wrote a play, *The Easter Man*, under the name Evan Hunter, was best known to fans of crime fiction as?

- A) Mickey Spillane
- B) George V. Higgins
- C) Robert B. Parker
- D) Ed McBain

5 Easter Island, in the south-eastern Pacific Ocean is now an overseas territory of which country?

- A) The Netherlands
- B) The United Kingdom
- C) Ecuador
- D) Chile



CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1** There'll be brass alongside it (4)
- 3** The age they want us to retire (5)
- 6** Make headway in water, under your own steam (4)
- 11** Full to capacity - or betrayal? (4-3)
- 12** Medic with scalpel? (7)
- 13** 60s supergroup of Clapton, Bruce and Baker (5)
- 14** Sports-watcher (9)
- 15** Make law (9)
- 18** Hard rock, used in building (or cigarette lighters?) (5)
- 20** Woolly ungulate (5)
- 21** Moving stairway (9)
- 23** Not sure (9)
- 26** Central female character of *The Sound of Music* (5)
- 27** Three battalions - of firefighters?! (7)
- 28** Back off (to safety) (7)
- 29** Building's 'lid' (4)
- 30** Unable to move - in the mud? (5)
- 31** 'Liquid bread' (4)

DOWN

- 1** Drama with song and dance (7)
- 2** Fellow worker (9)
- 4** Not having made a will (9)
- 5** Experience flavour (5)
- 7** Grain crop (5)
- 8** Mosque tower (7)
- 9** Goes with gloom (4)
- 10** ——— Dead - US band led by the late Jerry Garcia (8)
- 16** Bird? Plane? Nope ... (8)
- 17** Off the wall (9)
- 19** Poke one's nose in (9)
- 20** Sleep (7)
- 22** Potentially unstable 'business' bit of a nuclear power station (7)
- 24** Egyptian capital (5)
- 25** Wide awake - warning (5)
- 26** Usually nocturnal relative of butterfly (4)

Last month's answers and winners



Crossword solution March

March quiz answers

- 1.** A - 1901
- 2.** B - Iran
- 3.** D - 1992
- 4.** B - Hillary Clinton
- 5.** C - Baroness Bertha von Suttner

Winner of the January/February quiz
Dominic McGlynn, Derbyshire

Station Cat

The times they aren't a'changing

*Brian Coleman
– could he be
in line for a
nice long rest
from his public
duties?*



Back to the future

 I was alarmed to be sent a Manchester fire service Grey Book which sets out details of 12-hour shifts (8am to 8pm and 8pm to 8am). It also details the rents to be charged for those living on stations and the importance of “drive to arrive”.

The Cat was immediately alarmed at further details of modernisation plans and the possibility of rents being charged for those subjected to low level activity and risk or “day crew plus” shifts of 96 hours. And it's all so modern.

It was only when I got to the part about placing a



MARY EVANS PICTURE LIBRARY

It turns out it's the terms and conditions from 1902.

Twelve-hour shifts, living on stations, drive to arrive? All from 110 years ago ... how times have changed.

Meter mayhem

 Great excitement at the thought that, after May, the London borough of Barnet may be rid of Brian Coleman, who is its odious London Assembly Member as well as chair of London's fire authority. Coleman also has various influential positions at a national level, so the effects of his loss will ripple out.

Apparently the leafy borough's residents loathe the man just as much as London's firefighters do.

It seems to have been Coleman's bright idea, first to put up parking charges, then to cover up all the parking meters

in the borough so that you have to pay by making a long, automated and inefficiently handled telephone call.

Result? Horrendous charges and fines for local residents, and less revenue for the council, because everyone parks their car in the supermarket car parks now.

Nasty party

 As if all that wasn't enough, Coleman has just been condemned by the Standards Authority for abusing constituents.

Apparently a resident questioned the propriety of the North London Waste Authority using a firm of contractors which also helped build a light rail system linking illegal Israeli settlements in occupied East Jerusalem to West Jerusalem.

Coleman wrote back to her: “In my book anti-Zionism is just a modern form of anti-Semitism. I suppose 70 years ago you would have been in the blackshirts.” Honestly, the man really is that big an ass.

Tale of two crises

 AssetCo, private owners of the entire London fleet of appliances and 50,000 vital pieces of equipment, has been doing a fine job. The company's

financial problems, court action by debtors and suspension of its share price had no impact, according to London Fire Brigade over the last 18 months.

The company performs the same “service” for Lincolnshire and had hoped to expand to assist other fire services.

Reality has bitten there with a report from the brigade itself raising a “number of performance shortfalls” caused “largely as a result of AssetCo's financial crises”. These crises “had caused the diversion of AssetCo's management focus from the normal business activities of delivering the service”.

It included:

- poor levels of aerial appliance availability and a sharp increase in the time taken to repair or replace defective appliances, resulting in temporary reductions in the level of fire cover in some areas;
- serious delays in the delivery of operational equipment and training vehicles, caused by a combination of poor administration and non-payment to suppliers;
- poor defect monitoring.
- scheduled servicing of appliances not carried out on 34 occasions;
- a failure to supply information relating to 80 road accidents involving fire appliances, meaning that the brigade has been unable to recover taxpayers' money from third parties.

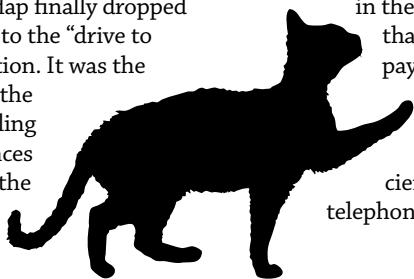
Try to remember this next time a politician spouts off about how the public sector needs the skills and expertise of the private sector to achieve better results.

The duties at the various stations will be from 8-am – 8pm and from 8pm – 8-am. The men will fall in according to seniority. The station officer will see that every man is properly dressed, and neat and clean in his uniform, the duty-men wearing their belts and axes.

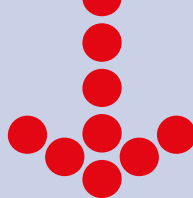
Pg19, para 41
Manchester Fire Brigade terms and conditions 1902

handkerchief between your teeth to keep out smoke when entering a building that I became suspicious. Was this the updated *Technical Bulletin 1* on entering premises with breathing apparatus? Hopefully not.

The catflap finally dropped when I got to the “drive to arrive” section. It was the safe use of the horses hauling the appliances which was the giveaway.



25-year badges



Dai Rhys (r), Bridgend, South Wales, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Neil Byrne



Ian Jones (r), Bridgend, South Wales, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Neil Byrne



Kris Shroll (r), Bridgend, South Wales, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Neil Byrne



Ivan Williamson (r), white watch, Dunstable, receives his 25-year badge from Bedfordshire and Luton branch secretary Paul Cawte



Pete Kisby (r) branch training rep, Lincolnshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair Chris Hides. Looking on are training branch members Dave Chalk (l) and John Aspland



Paul Marshall (r) white watch, Wallsend, Tyne and Wear, receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair Russ King



Mark Reynolds (r), Bridgend, South Wales, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Neil Byrne



Neil Tomlins (r), Bridgend, South Wales, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Neil Byrne



Martin Watson (r), Bridgend, South Wales, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Neil Byrne



John Jennings (l) receives his 25-year badge from West Midlands brigade membership secretary Pardeep Raw



Paul Watson (r), Bridgend, South Wales, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Neil Byrne



Phil Pinchers (r), Bridgend, South Wales, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Neil Byrne



Chris Rayner (centre, r), white watch, Broughton, Buckinghamshire, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Nick Paine, with (l-r) Fraiser Lambie, Ian Mansfield, Mark Boxall, Andy Gillett and John Williams, white watch, looking on



Mick Garland (l), green watch, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, receives his 25-year badge from branch chair Stevie Rae with green watch looking on

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Change of address or next of kin

Advise your Brigade Organiser of any change of address and Head Office of changes to next of kin or nominations for benefits.

FBU FREEPHONE LEGAL ADVICE LINE 0808 100 6061

The line provides advice for personal injury, family law, wills, conveyancing, personal finance and consumer issues.

For disciplinary and employment-related queries contact your local FBU representative.