

FIREFIGHTER

THE MAGAZINE OF THE FIRE BRIGADES UNION | WWW.FBU.ORG.UK | FEBRUARY/MARCH 2021

HMICFRS REPORT

UNDER ATTACK

YOUR RIGHTS
AND YOUR
SAFETY

SPECIAL ISSUE

**WE MUST
STAND TOGETHER**
SEE P8



**TIMELINE OF
A BETRAYAL**
SEE P12



**THE PLOT
AGAINST THE FBU**
SEE P14





MATT WRACK

AN ASSAULT ON FIREFIGHTERS AND THEIR UNION

ASSAULT ON OUR UNION

2021 has started with a full-on assault on our union.

First, under the advice of the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), fire and rescue service national employers scrapped the national agreement covering Covid-19 duties, removing vital agreed national safety measures that had kept our members safe during the pandemic.

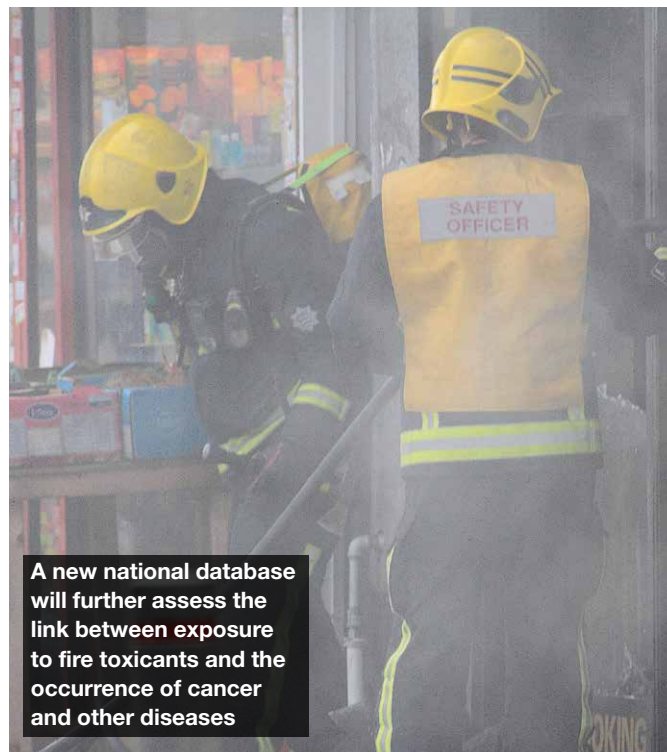
Then, Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI-CFRS) launched a bitter and orchestrated political attack on the FBU, accusing our union of being an obstacle in the pandemic response, repeating calls for the tearing up of members' terms and conditions and their right to have a union negotiate on their behalf.

We know that the government, national employers and the NFCC are all in this together and don't want the FBU – and its members – to have a seat at the table.

It has become clear that the government intends to bring forward proposals this year which will attempt to make the above a reality.

We know the public are on our side, and as a union we must do all we can to withstand these attacks.

You can read the timeline of what happened during the collapse of the agreement on pages 12 and 13; read my comment piece on pages 10 and 11 about what these attacks mean, and on pages 14 and 15, delve into a Q&A which answers all the important questions on the inspectorate's report.



COVID DUTIES

The FBU has been working hard urging employers to get back around the table and reinstate the national agreement that was unilaterally ended by them in January.

We want nationally agreed safety measures to protect our members delivering high-risk Covid duties and services from outbreaks of this deadly disease.

The agreement – based on the understanding that risks do not vary from service to service – which worked well throughout the pandemic – is the best way to achieve that.

CANCER REGISTRY

The health and safety of our members has always been paramount.

That is why as part of our ground-breaking contaminants project with the University of Central Lancashire we have now launched the UK Firefighters Cancer and Disease Registry (FCDR).

Our own survey had indicated that the prevalence of cancer among firefighters is four times higher than in the general population.

Now, the new national database will further assess the link between exposure to fire toxicants and the occurrence of cancer and other diseases.

We are urging retired and serving firefighters who

have or are suffering from a chronic illness to add their name to the registry – and help save firefighters' lives.

FALLEN BROTHERS

Sadly, the start of this year saw the news that three firefighters, and FBU members, had died.

Brothers Chris Page of Sandy Fire Station in Bedfordshire passed away on 5 January after contracting Covid-19.

The same day we also lost Brother James Morris to kidney cancer. James served as a retained firefighter for 12 years, most recently at Rugeley Community Fire station.

On 16 January Alec Ewell, crew manager with Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service, lost his life, also to Covid-19.

We are devastated to lose three colleagues in the space of two weeks and send our heartfelt thoughts and condolences to family, friends and colleagues.

As part of the FBU's commitment to supporting members and their families, we have partnered with DONATE, an online fundraising platform that makes it easier to support injured firefighters and bereaved families.

Thousands have already been raised for Brothers Chris, Alec and James and there is still time to make a donation if you have not already – see back cover.

We are also carefully examining any link between fire service work, the spread of Covid-19 and its impact on our members.



CONTENTS

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2021

NEWS

- 4** Union prepares to fight government plan to silence the voice of firefighters
- 5** FBU rep honoured for Covid work
Government agrees FBU demand for pension choice
- 6** Rogue fire chiefs undermine virus safety
Ben Selby, EC member for East Midlands, elected as next FBU vice-president
Mick Harper

FEATURES

- 8** Firefighters under attack – why we must stand together, by Matt Wrack
- 12** Timeline of a betrayal
How a premeditated and underhand assault on the rights of firefighters unfolded
- 14** Background to a plot
Details of people, plans and policies behind the attack on the FBU

REGULARS

- 5** Sounding off
Teachers also facing government and media attacks on their right to representation by a trade union
- 7** News focus
FBU urges firefighters to join new cancer and disease registry
- 16** Equalities
Inspectorate errors worsen Covid risk for ethnic minority firefighters
- 17** Legal Beagle
Brexit and your rights at work
- 18** Noticeboard
Flying lizard hitches a helmet rescue
New FBU shop items
Give us your views on *Firefighter*
- 19** Station Cat
Fire and ice
- 20** Long service badges



FIREFIGHTER

Published by the Fire Brigades Union
Bradley House, 68 Coombe Road
Kingston upon Thames KT2 7AE
www.fbu.org.uk

Firefighter production team:
Tom Colclough, Anna Zych,
Lisa Irving and Alan Slingsby

Cover image: Ian Marlow

Print: Walstead UK, Storey's Bar Road,
Peterborough PE1 5YS

Firefighter is mailed in a 100% compostable wrapper. Please do not recycle the wrapper but dispose of it in your home compost heap, your garden waste or food waste bin.



PEFC Certified

This product is
from sustainably
managed forests and
controlled sources

www.pefc.org



NEWS

CONTAMINANTS

Union urges firefighters to help save others by joining new register
p7



FIRE CHIEFS RISK SAFETY

Control staff told to switch off NHS contact tracing app
p6

GET READY FOR MAJOR BATTLE, WARNS WRACK AFTER ATTACK ON SAFETY DEAL

INSPECTORATE REPORT

The FBU is preparing for a major battle with the UK government as Whitehall prepares a policy document designed to reduce union influence in the fire and rescue service.

Home Office sources briefed *The Times* newspaper that a White Paper detailing fire and rescue service “reforms”, including looking at the FBU’s role, can be expected “within months”.

It is said to be a response to a political attack on firefighters and the FBU by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), in a report commissioned by the Home Office.

HMICFRS baselessly accused the FBU of preventing firefighters from volunteering to help communities through the pandemic, after fire service bosses collapsed an agreement covering firefighters’ Covid-19 response work.

The FBU had brokered an unprecedented agreement with the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and fire service employers, allowing firefighters to volunteer for 16 new activities to help the fight against coronavirus.

The union was negotiating safety arrangements for firefighters to assist the rollout of mass vaccinations when employers unilaterally collapsed the agreement mid-January, leaving firefighters without any nationally agreed safety protections for carrying out Covid-19 work.

The agreement required firefighters returning from high-risk Covid-19 work to receive a negative polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test result before returning to their fire and rescue workplace. The PCR test is currently the most accurate of the widely available tests.

To ensure the test’s accuracy, firefighters need to isolate for three days



A firefighter at work outside the London Nightingale hospital

from the end of their Covid-19 work detachment before taking the test. This period is the minimum requirement of the test.

A small number of fire chiefs refused to continue this safety measure, causing the NFCC to withdraw its support in December.

The agreement was brought under the National Joint Council (NJC), where the FBU meets fire service employers, for a month before being terminated by employers.

Just days later, HMICFRS released its report into the fire service response to the pandemic.

The report attacked the FBU and

called crucial safety measures in the Covid-19 work agreement “more of a hindrance than a help”.

Despite recognising that the fire and rescue service had not experienced the mass outbreaks seen in other parts of the public sector, the inspectorate claimed that risk assessments produced by the FBU were “unnecessarily detailed” and “too prescriptive”.

Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary, condemned the attack as “biased and political” and has warned FBU members to prepare for a major battle with government.

“We’ve faced attacks from governments of all stripes,” said Wrack. “But this Tory government has made no secret of its disdain for workers and their unions.”

“We need to be organised and united in the coming months, for this looks set to be one of the biggest industrial battles of our lives.”

INSPECTOR CLAIMS COVID PRECAUTIONS 'MORE OF A HINDRANCE THAN A HELP'



Dave Pitt at a TUC regional health and safety forum updating other unions on the work the FBU is doing to tackle members' exposure to contaminants

FBU REP HONoured FOR WORK DURING PANDEMIC

QUEEN'S FIRE SERVICE MEDAL

Dave Pitt, a crew commander and West Midlands FBU health and safety rep, was awarded the Queen's Fire Service Medal in the New Year's Honours list.

He was recognised for his hard work during the pandemic, including working with West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service to implement risk assessments as part of a national agreement between the FBU, fire chiefs, and national employers, which allowed firefighters to safely assist the Covid-19 response.

He also supported the setting up of a

Nightingale hospital in the area and was part of a team that was one of the first in the country to assist with moving the bodies of the deceased.

Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary, said: "We are pleased that one of our own has been recognised for their commitment during the Covid-19 crisis.

"Dave's tireless work has undoubtedly enabled firefighters to safely assist the NHS, the care sector, and their communities through this pandemic.

"Congratulations to Dave on this well-deserved award."

ANOTHER VICTORY IN FBU'S PENSIONS FIGHT

PENSIONS

Fire and rescue authorities must stop holding up firefighter pensions, an Employment Appeal Tribunal has ruled.

This follows a 2018 Court of Appeal ruling that, by forcing firefighters onto worse pension schemes while allowing others to remain on their old schemes, the government had committed unlawful age discrimination. The Supreme Court rejected the government's attempt to appeal the case.

Fire service bosses refused to accept their responsibility to return firefighters to their rightful pensions, launching an appeal that claimed they were not responsible for age discrimination and could not pay firefighters their proper pensions without a change in the law.

But an Employment Appeal Tribunal has now ruled that fire authorities must pay firefighters the pensions that they are rightfully owed.

The FBU is launching new court proceedings

to make employers deal with these cases without waiting for new regulations.

The tribunal ruling comes as the government said firefighters are entitled to choose which scheme to claim at the end of their career, caving to union pressure.

The FBU had called for ministers to reject an option that would have forced members to choose their scheme now without access to vital information like their personal circumstances at the time of retirement.

SOUNDING OFF

Jess Edwards, an executive member of the National Education Union, draws a parallel between political attacks on teachers and firefighters

IT'S NOT ABOUT 'DIFFICULT UNIONS AND LAZY WORKERS'

Teachers and school support staff are used to being accused of working against the best interests of children.

Now, it seems, firefighters are on the receiving end of a similar orchestrated barrage from the government, bosses and much of the media.

Just as our profession has been denigrated in a torrent of articles, all aimed at painting us as the obstacle to children being back at school, so too have firefighters, and specifically the Fire Brigades Union.

According to the *Daily Mail*, teachers are sitting at home watching daytime TV and moonlighting with private tutoring work.

The truth is that school staff are working hard. They are on rotas teaching bubbles of vulnerable children and the children of key workers. They are setting work and teaching live sessions. They are home schooling their own kids and trying, like everyone else, to keep body, mind and soul together.

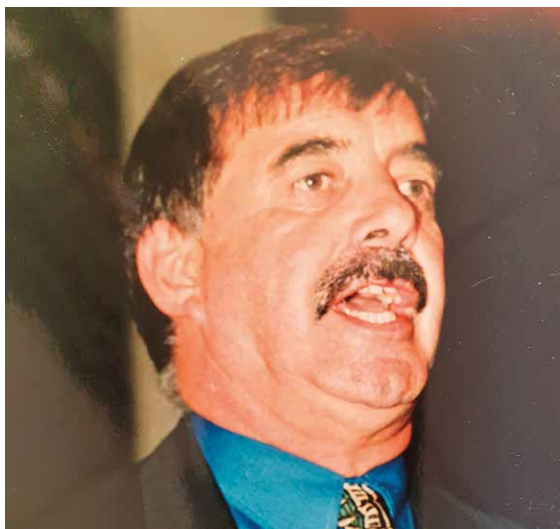
Nobody wants more than us for schools to be open again. But the government must get a handle on the pandemic. We can't afford for schools to become centres of Covid transmission.

This is not about difficult unions, or lazy workers.

When many of us used our rights under section 44 of the Employment Act 1996 and refused to attend unsafe workplaces, we did so with community safety foremost in our minds. Schools were closed and lives were undoubtedly saved.

Ordinary people know who has their back and they know it's not this Tory government.





COMMITTED TO FIGHTING FOR FIREFIGHTERS AND ORDINARY PEOPLE

MICK HARPER

The FBU is deeply saddened to learn of the passing of former FBU president Mick Harper, who died in November last year.

Mick made a huge contribution to the union over the course of 35 years, serving as South Yorkshire brigade chair from 1977, Yorkshire and Humberside regional treasurer from 1985, executive council member from 1995, and vice-president from 1998. He was elected as president in 1999, serving until his retirement in 2002.

He was also heavily involved in local politics, serving on Shafton parish council and then later as a member of Barnsley council.

Ian Murray, FBU president, said: "Mick was a staunch trade unionist who will be remembered for his commitment to fighting for the interests of firefighters and ordinary working people."

"He will be sadly missed by everyone in the FBU who knew him, we send our thoughts and condolences to his family and friends."

ROGUE FIRE CHIEFS UNDERMINE COVID SAFETY

EAST MIDLANDS

Two chief fire officers in the East Midlands recklessly put firefighters and control staff at risk of Covid-19 infection by undermining test, trace, and isolate operations.

In Northamptonshire, three firefighters were contacted by track and trace and were instructed to self-isolate for 10 days, after their colleague tested positive for coronavirus.

But brigade management instructed the firefighters to return to their workplace just six days into their 10-day isolation period, threatening to mark them as absent without leave if they did not comply.

The chief fire officer claimed that Public Health England had

issued an exemption for cutting the isolation short.

But the isolating firefighters were not asked about their interactions with their Covid-positive colleague before being instructed to return to work, so neither the brigade nor Public Health England knew their risk of exposure.

In Derbyshire, 11 emergency fire control staff tested positive for Covid-19 and a further nine were required to self-isolate, impacting three of the control room's four watches.

Rather than bringing in stronger control measures in the workplace, brigade management instructed control staff to switch off their NHS contact tracing apps in the workplace, which could allow further outbreaks to go undetected.



BEN SELBY ELECTED AS NEXT FBU VICE PRESIDENT

UNION ELECTION

Ben Selby, East Midlands executive council member, vowed to protect members and the fire and rescue service from government attacks after being elected as the next vice president of the FBU.

Ben has served as a firefighter in Lincolnshire for 18 years. He was elected to the executive council

two years ago, having previously served as brigade chair, brigade secretary, regional vice chair and regional secretary.

Ben said: "It's a great honour to be elected as the next vice president of our great union."

"Branches across every one of our 12 regions nominated me, which is something I won't forget."

"It appears that our national employers have given up the defence of the National Joint Council."

"Attacks on our terms and conditions are coming very soon, pushed by a number of chief officers and by central government."

"The FBU has a proud history of fighting to protect and improve our conditions. We will need to do that again."

"I'm privileged to have been elected as the next vice president, but I'm clear that our job now is to unite and build a campaign to ensure the fire service and our conditions are protected and improved, and to ensure there is a professional fire service for future generations."

Current vice president Andy Noble will retire in June.



The project will assess the potential link between exposure to fire toxicants and the increased occurrence of cancers and other diseases among firefighters

FBU URGES FIREFIGHTERS TO SIGN UP TO NEW CANCER AND DISEASE REGISTRY

The FBU is calling on every current and former UK firefighter suffering from a serious or chronic illness to help save firefighters' lives in the future by signing up to the UK Firefighters Cancer and Disease Registry.

The new project, commissioned by the FBU and conducted by researchers at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan), will assess the potential link between exposure to fire toxicants and the increased occurrence of cancers and other diseases among firefighters, allowing researchers to analyse data on a long-term basis.

Scientists will track the number of cases of cancer and other illnesses among firefighters over time, investigate possible causes of cancer and other diseases – such as exposure to toxic fire contaminants – and evaluate the risk of different cancers among firefighters compared with the rest of the population.

Anna Stec, professor in fire chemistry and toxicity at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan), said that the UK's National Cancer Registry and Analysis Service is currently not able to provide

any reliable data on cancer incidence or mortality among firefighters.

The new registry, says Stec, will help researchers to keep track of all firefighters diagnosed with diseases and “identify any association between a firefighter's occupation and exposure to fire carcinogens”.

As well as cancers, the registry will track other common illnesses, including nervous system diseases, ischaemic heart disease, strokes, cerebrovascular disease, aneurysms, pulmonary diseases, circulatory disease, renal diseases, and fibrosis and cirrhosis of the liver.

All firefighters, both serving and retired, as well as those that have or have not been previously diagnosed with an

illness, are encouraged to register.

Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary, urged all FBU members to add their name “so we can further expose the shocking numbers of firefighters suffering from cancer and other diseases”.

This research follows an independent UCLan report commissioned by the FBU that provides guidance for fire services on how to minimise exposure to fire effluents, as well as highlighting the high levels of carcinogens present in the working environment of firefighters.

In Canada and parts of the United States, the link between firefighting and deadly diseases has been recognised in legislation, allowing firefighters and their families to receive compensation where health has been affected or where firefighters have died as a result.

The FBU said that UK brigades need to be doing far more to avoid contamination in the first place and, as the body of evidence grows, “politicians must be willing to step up and protect their own firefighters.”

■ Register at uclan.ac.uk/research/activity/fcd/

**REGISTRY WILL HELP RESEARCHERS
KEEP TRACK OF ALL FIREFIGHTERS
DIAGNOSED WITH DISEASES
AND IDENTIFY ANY ASSOCIATION
BETWEEN A FIREFIGHTER'S
OCCUPATION AND EXPOSURE
TO FIRE CARCINOGENS**



FIREFIGHTERS UNDER ATTACK



WE WILL RESIST

**OUR MEMBERS FACE A
MASSIVE ASSAULT**

WE MUST STAND TOGETHER

The HMICFRS report was part of a deliberate political attack on firefighters and their union, explains **Matt Wrack**, FBU general secretary



HMICFRS REPORT

In the middle of winter and at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, politicians and chief fire officers launched an attack on firefighters across the UK, our industry and against the Fire Brigades Union.

On 13 January, fire employers at the behest of the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) walked away from the UK-wide agreement with the FBU designed to keep firefighters safe during the pandemic.

They were prepared to weaken our efforts to serve communities and jeopardise industrial relations by tearing up arrangements in place and working well since the pandemic hit.

The NFCC wanted to downgrade firefighters' safety in the latest lockdown, at the very time when new variants of the virus were driving a surge of new Covid-19 cases, overwhelming our hospitals and causing thousands to die every day.

At a time when whole watches had to isolate and tragically some of our members lost their lives to Covid-19, they sought to scrap safety measures that had kept most safe over many months.

ATTACK ON ALL FIREFIGHTERS

Then, on 22 January, the fire inspectorate in England (HMICFRS) published a report blaming firefighters and the FBU for what it described as shortcomings in the pandemic response.

It should have been a good news story about how well firefighters have undertaken additional voluntary work to tackle the pandemic while maintaining a full range emergency response.

Sadly, HMICFRS decided to peddle the malicious falsehood that firefighters were held back by their union.

In no uncertain terms, the report called the FBU a "barrier" that must be "overcome or resolved".

A year ago HMICFRS wanted the Westminster government to tear up firefighters' collective bargaining arrangements, giving absolute power to chief officers.

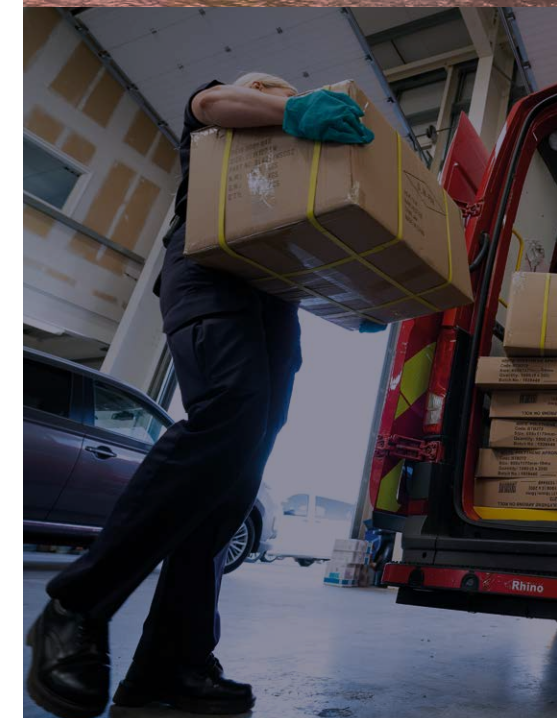
The inspectorate recycled the same proposals in this report.

While we do not know exactly what government plans will include, we are likely to see a serious attack on the National Joint Council (NJC), where the

Firefighters have undertaken additional voluntary work to tackle the pandemic while maintaining a full range emergency response



THE NFCC WANTS TO DOWNGRADE FIREFIGHTER SAFETY WHEN NEW VARIANTS ARE DRIVING A SURGE IN COVID-19 CASES



PAUL WOOD



FBU is fully represented.

The government wants to further attack or scrap the Grey Book, which sets UK-wide pay and conditions, including those covering safety, maternity, discipline and grievance.

There is no doubt what this would mean if the attack was successful.

They would attack firefighters' pay further. They would seek the ability to force through new duty and shift systems.

They would seek to impose new roles and new work without pay, sending firefighters to any job, anytime and anywhere.

Our attackers want a free hand to impose new contracts, break up watches and impose arbitrary discipline on anyone who questions them.

WHY NOW?

Politicians at Westminster are attacking the FBU because this union has stood up robustly for our members.

They hate the fact that we defend firefighters' pay and pensions. They do not like our demands for investment in our service. They balk when we point the finger at their deregulation agenda, which weakened the fire safety regime, leading to disasters such as Grenfell.

The Westminster government gave the NFCC £10m last year to build up its operation.

The NFCC claims to be a small organisation of volunteers. But it actually has its own commercial arm and now central government money and licence to attack firefighters and our union.

Some chief fire officers are busy spreading rumours and telling outright untruths to the national press about our union. They do not want firefighters to have a voice. They want our members to shut up and follow orders.

This attack is just the latest in a long line. We saw the Bain review. Then it was the Audit Commission. More recently, the Knight review, Carr review and Thomas review churned out hostility towards our members and the FBU.

Our enemies will seek to divide us, pitting wholtime against retained, fire stations against control, officers against other firefighters. They blame FBU elected officials. But our members stand together because that is what we do on the job.

Over the course of this year, we are going to need FBU members to get more involved in our union. That means holding and attending meetings, discussing the situation with as many colleagues as possible, ensuring you read our communications - and of course following us on social media.

Speak out, stand together and take action. The FBU will never retreat from defending our members, because firefighters are the union.

TIMELINE OF A BETRAYAL



TIMELINE OF A BETRAYAL

15 JANUARY 2020

HMICFRS attacks FBU and collective bargaining

In its first annual *State of Fire* report, HMICFRS attacks collective bargaining, threatening to implement a pay review body, which has been used to water down pay and standards in other sectors, and attacks the FBU as having “undue influence”.

21 FEBRUARY 2020

First NJC circular warning about Covid-19 risks

26 MARCH 2020

Tripartite agreement reached on Covid-19 work

A ground-breaking agreement is reached between the FBU, National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and the fire and rescue service National Employers, allowing firefighters to volunteer to take on new activities to respond to the pandemic.

17 APRIL 2020

Government announces fire and rescue Covid-19 tests

The government announces it will extend Covid-19 testing to fire and rescue staff.

Events surrounding the HMICFRS report reveal it was part of a planned attack to prevent their union protecting the health, lives and rights of firefighters

22 JULY 2020

National risk assessments circulated

The Tripartite agreement is extended and national risk assessments circulated including requirements for detachment and PCR testing.

24 SEPTEMBER 2020

Agreement extended pending completion of local risk assessments

The agreement is extended to allow fire and rescue services time to fully implement national risk assessments locally, as some brigades had not fully complied with all measures.

3 JUNE 2020

Testing for firefighters returning from Covid work implemented

The Tripartite Group (FBU, NFCC and National Employers) agree to develop national best practice risk assessments for each Covid-19 activity, including:

- Detaching firefighter volunteers from their fire and rescue workplace for the duration of their Covid-19 work.
- Requiring firefighters to take a PCR coronavirus test three days after finishing high-risk Covid work and to receive a negative result before returning to their fire and rescue workplace.

KEY ORGANISATIONS

NFCC

National Fire Chiefs Council

National Employers

Fire and rescue service employers formed of fire authority councillors and fire board appointees

Tripartite Group

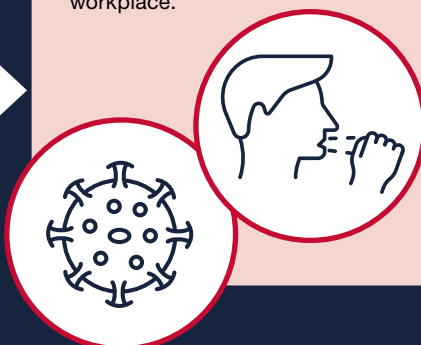
FBU, NFCC and National Employers joint working group

NJC

National Joint Council where the FBU and National Employers negotiate pay and conditions

HMICFRS

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services





29 OCTOBER 2020

Brigades warned that risk assessments are necessary

While the vast majority of brigades have accepted the best practice risk assessments, the Tripartite Group voices concerns that some control measures are being ignored in parts of the country and reiterate that local risk assessments need to be produced for all Covid-19 activities. By now, firefighters had helped more than 100,000 vulnerable households, assisted 80,000 ambulance incidents, assembled 68,000 face masks, and moved more than 2,000 bodies of the deceased.

9 DECEMBER 2020

NJC supports vaccine work

After some NFCC chiefs refuse to support requirements for firefighters to receive a negative PCR coronavirus test before returning from Covid-19 work detachments, the FBU and National Employers rescue the agreement by bringing it under the NJC.

NJC issues a circular stating its intent for firefighters to assist with the rollout of Covid-19 mass vaccination.



**10 DECEMBER 2020 –
10 JANUARY 2021**

Negotiations over safety measures continue

19 JANUARY 2021

HMICFRS report announced

HMICFRS notifies stakeholders, journalists and relevant press teams that its report on FRS work during the pandemic will be released on 22 January. The FBU press office, which was previously on the distribution list, is not sent the notification email and is again informed by a third party.

13 JANUARY 2021

Employers collapse agreement

National Employers unilaterally announce to fire and rescue services that the agreement has collapsed, without notifying or consulting the FBU. The union has to find out about the termination through third parties.

12 JANUARY 2021

Employers reject FBU proposal

In an email sent at 17:03, National Employers reject the FBU's proposal. The union considers compromise proposals.

11 JANUARY 2021

FBU sends vaccine safety proposal

The FBU formally proposes a suite of safety measures, including a combination of testing and isolation that would allow firefighters to safely assist the vaccine rollout and continue other Covid-19 activities. Employers say they will consider the proposal.

21 JANUARY 2021

Report withheld from FBU

The report is circulated to journalists before it has been sent to the FBU. HMICFRS ignores the FBU's requests to receive the report or a briefing in advance of media access. The FBU receives the report from a journalist five hours before finally receiving a copy from HMICFRS.

22 JANUARY 2021

HMICFRS report publicly attacks firefighters

The FBU slams the report as a "biased" and "politically motivated" attack on firefighters and their union. Home Office minister Lord Greenhalgh attacks the union, offensively suggesting firefighters were not stepping up to respond to the coronavirus crisis as they had during the Blitz.

23 JANUARY 2021

Home Office attack incoming

NFCC chair Roy Wilsher and an anonymous CFO brief a hostile story to *The Times* newspaper. The article warns that: "It is understood ministers are preparing for reform that would include looking at the FBU's role. A white paper is expected within months".

The FBU is preparing for one of the biggest attacks from government in its history

Q&A

The people, plans and policies behind plot against the FBU

WHAT IS HMICFRS?

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) is a Westminster government-appointed inspection body established in 1856 to inspect police services.

In 2017, Theresa May brought the fire and rescue service in England under the inspectorate's remit.

Last year, HMICFRS produced its first annual *State of Fire* report, which attacked the FBU as having "undue influence" over the fire and rescue service.

It recommended, with no evidence, scrapping firefighters' collective bargaining arrangements for pay and conditions, with chief fire officers given all the power and no accountability.

WHAT DID THIS YEAR'S HMICFRS REPORT FOCUS ON?

HMICFRS baselessly claimed that the FBU prevented firefighters from volunteering for Covid-19 duties, citing the collapse of the Covid-19 response agreement, driven by employers just a week previously.

The report claimed the FBU produced "unnecessarily detailed" safety requirements for firefighters' Covid-19 response work while, at the same time, noting that

large outbreaks and staff absences seen in other sectors "didn't materialise" in the fire and rescue service.

There is no evidence that HMICFRS has any technical expertise to make any judgement on risk assessments on fire service operational matters.

HMICFRS repeats its call from last year to dismantle collective bargaining and give chief fire officers and government unchecked authority to water down pay and conditions by scrapping the Grey Book.

Buried deep in the report were some criticisms of fire and rescue services, notably disgraceful failings on preparedness, safety and equality issues (see page 16). But the inspectorate made no recommendations on these matters.

WHY IS THE FBU CALLING THIS ATTACK 'POLITICAL'?

Despite having responsibility to inspect fire and rescue services, much of the report and the entirety of the press release circulated to media attempts to inspect our union – and does so entirely from the perspective of grievances held by some chief fire officers, egged on by ministers in England.

HMICFRS, the government's and the National Fire Chiefs Council's (NFCC) desire to dismantle collective bargaining and terms and conditions in the Grey Book would be far easier to implement if the FBU's influence and reputation is under attack.

The NFCC is funded by Westminster and, while all chief fire officers technically have a voice in the body, it has become a mouthpiece for a small number of chiefs in England who want

to work with the government to drive down standards.

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, the largest brigade in the UK, recently disengaged from the NFCC.

The timing of the report and the collapse of the Covid-19 work agreement suggest that this was a coordinated attack aimed at damaging the FBU.

HMICFRS ignored the substantive fire and rescue service issues in its media spin of the report, solely attacking the FBU and withholding the report from the union for as long as possible.

The FBU was not consulted by HMICFRS on the circumstances surrounding the collapse of the agreement, the report's primary criticism. As a result, the report's account of events in many brigades is littered with inaccuracies, half-truths, and falsehoods.

WHAT ARE THE GREY BOOK AND THE NJC?

The Grey Book is the document that details the terms and conditions for operational and control fire and rescue service staff included.

It is negotiated by the National Joint Council (NJC), where the FBU meets fire and rescue service national employers representing fire authorities and fire boards.

NJC negotiations and the Grey Book also make sure that a firefighter's role is clearly defined and that every activity is funded by government, properly





EDDIE HOWLAND

equipped, risk assessed, and accounted for in firefighter pay.

WHAT DOES HMICFRS WANT TO DO WITH THE GREY BOOK AND NJC?

The inspectorate, the government and chief fire officers seem to want to tear up the Grey Book and attack or scrap the NJC, which would make it easier to attack pay and conditions and impose duties that would otherwise require proper negotiation.

WHAT DOES HMICFRS WANT TO BRING IN INSTEAD?

HMICFRS wants to make two damaging changes which would effectively dismantle national collective bargaining in the fire and rescue service:

OPERATIONAL INDEPENDENCE

– the inspectorate wants chief fire officers to have near-total authority over the fire and rescue service without any democratic accountability from fire authorities or from the workforce. “Operational independence” really means “political control”.

PAY REVIEW BODY – a quango that sets pay, role maps, conditions and contracts for firefighters and control staff without involving the FBU or fire employers. Appointed by and under the direction of government, they have been used in other sectors to water down pay and conditions and expand workloads without negotiation.



"CHIEF FIRE OFFICERS WILL SAY 'JUMP' AND FIREFIGHTERS WILL HAVE TO ASK 'HOW HIGH?'"

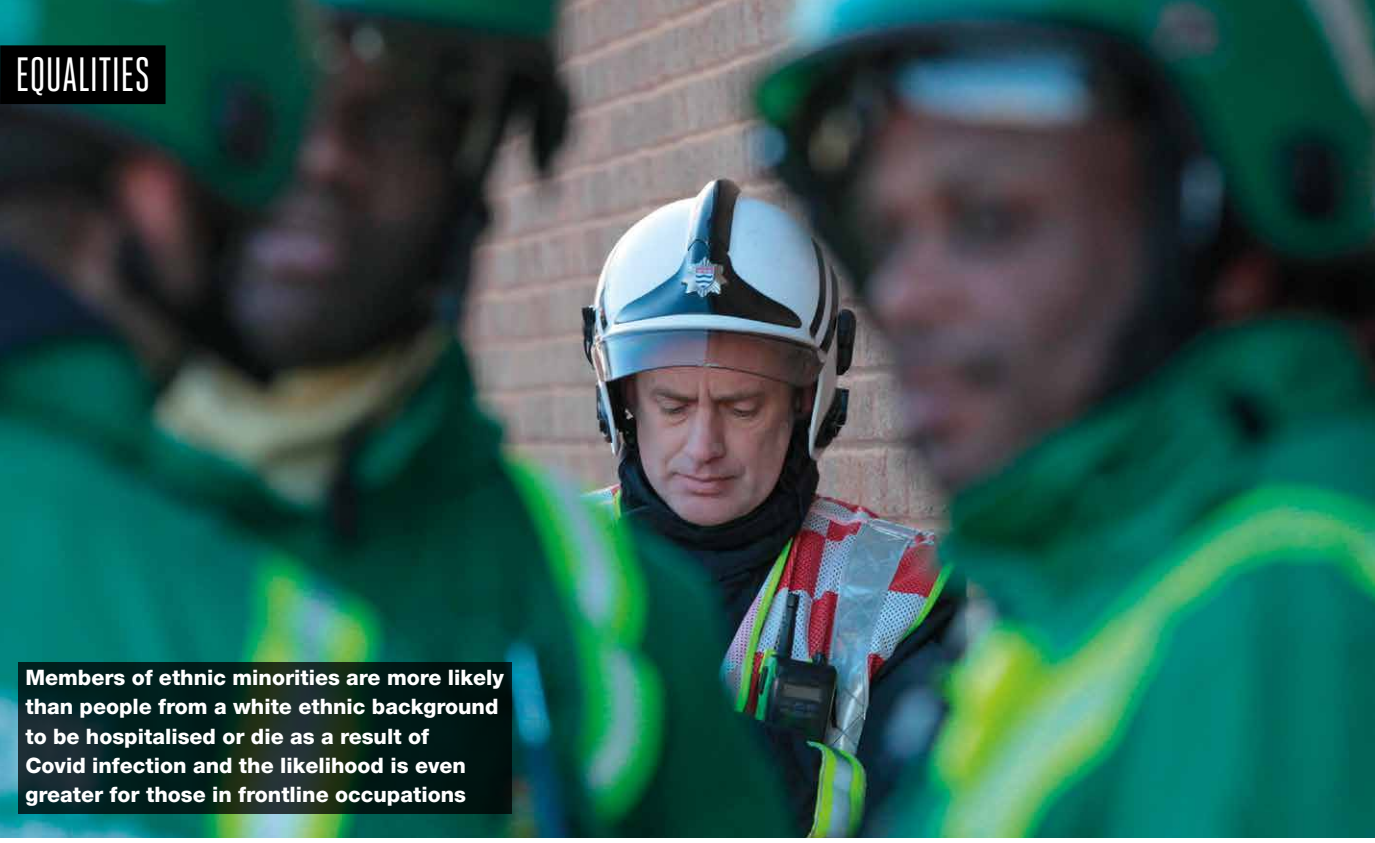
MATT WRACK

WHAT WOULD THIS MEAN FOR FIREFIGHTERS AND CONTROL STAFF?

This would mean weakening or removing a voice for firefighters and control staff in their pay, working conditions, contracts, safety, discipline and leave arrangements. Ministers and chief fire officers would be able to impose new work without compensation and without agreed safety measures. It is part of a trend of casualisation of labour – senior management dictates everything, workers do whatever is ordered, whenever it is instructed.

HOW IS THE GOVERNMENT PLANNING TO RESPOND?

The government has made no formal announcements, but *The Times* newspaper has been briefed that a “reform” White Paper that will look at the FBU’s role will be published in the coming months.



Members of ethnic minorities are more likely than people from a white ethnic background to be hospitalised or die as a result of Covid infection and the likelihood is even greater for those in frontline occupations

INSPECTORATE MISTAKES WORSEN COVID RISKS FOR ETHNIC MINORITY FIREFIGHTERS

Equality, accuracy and firefighter safety during a deadly pandemic take second place to union-bashing in the inspectorate's report, says FBU BEMM committee national chair **Tariq Khan**

HMICFRS's report was more than a politically motivated attack on the FBU. The inspectorate chose to prioritise union-bashing over highlighting and tackling critical equalities failings in fire and rescue services.

Its report shows a shocking disregard for accuracy when detailing brigades' approaches to people from "high-risk" BAME backgrounds in its local reports, which assessed each fire and rescue service individually.

Many local reports had commended fire and rescue services for the implementation of additional control measures and appropriate consultation with those from high-risk ethnic backgrounds.

But, in reality, operational employees from high-risk minority ethnic groups had not been approached, spoken to, or consulted in any way in some of these brigades – least of all regarding the suitability of control measures and introduction of risk assessments.

We know that there have been many different approaches to implementing risk assessments for those who are identified

as high risk, but the reports made by the HMICFRS are alarmingly vague.

A June 2020 report from Public Health England identified statistics early on showing that those from black and south Asian backgrounds were twice as likely to die from Covid-19, and three times more likely to be hospitalised than those from a white ethnic background.

These figures were found to be worse where workers had frontline occupations.

More recent data from the Universities of Leicester and Nottingham has also shown that those from black backgrounds are twice as likely to become infected with the virus, while those from an Asian background are 1.5 times more likely to be infected compared to those from a white ethnic background.

Identifying these statistics is far more than a "tick-box" exercise. We are talking about personal protection, risk analysis and implementation of safe systems of

work for our workforce, our people.

Firefighters and control staff face the additional stress of turning up to work every day and knowing that they – and the families they return home to – are at increased risk.

More work is being undertaken by the government to understand how and why those from particular backgrounds are so adversely affected, but it will be some time before we truly understand the nature of it.

The reality is that to simply apply a label of black, Asian, and minority ethnic (BAME) and put in generic control measures will not account for the varying reasons that many are affected.

For many, the statistics speak for themselves and highlight some of the inequalities currently present in our healthcare system and society overall.

HMICFRS's vague and inaccurate reporting shows a complete disregard to all those from a high-risk ethnic background in the fire and rescue service.

We must question what kind of criteria were used to "assess" whether a brigade's response was deemed suitable and the consistency of the reporting structure.

Mistakes made during a deadly pandemic cost people their lives. At such a pivotal time, misreporting and disregarding facts serves only to worsen the already disproportionately high risk that ethnic minority firefighters face from the virus.

MISREPORTING AND DISREGARDING FACTS SERVES ONLY TO WORSEN THE ALREADY DISPROPORTIONATELY HIGH RISK THAT ETHNIC MINORITY FIREFIGHTERS FACE FROM THE VIRUS

BREXIT

HOW LEAVING THE EU COULD IMPACT FBU MEMBERS

Richard Arthur of Thompsons Solicitors, explains how leaving the EU could impact FBU members.

In the UK, union membership protects, informs and supports workers and their rights.

Approximately 6 million people currently benefit from being in a trade union, and in our post-Brexit Britain, many more will need that protection.

Trade unions are all too aware that much of the foundation of what we recognise in the UK as basic rights for employees is born out of European law – but, will these rights remain the same now we have left the EU?

The UK has benefited from the judgments of the Court of Justice of the European Union in the social and employment sphere for many years – on working time, transfers of undertakings, equal pay, discrimination and maternity rights.

It is a concern that, without the protection of EU law, most UK labour law standards could lag behind those in EU countries.

Without the protections of minimum standards derived from EU law, the government will be able to introduce employment laws of its own choosing.

The trade agreement between the UK and the EU provides very little in the way of protection for individual EU workers' rights in the future.

Boris Johnson has been clear all along that his

government intends to diverge from EU standards.

Although the government has said that, for now, it will not be bringing forward plans to reform workers' rights post-Brexit, many expect Johnson and his government to eventually take advantage of its 80-seat majority and attack workers' protections: protection from excessive working hours; breaks from work; and how workers get paid if they are able to take leave – the same rights many FBU members have relied on

during the pandemic.

The government will more than likely present its plans concerning EU workers' rights as part of an economic recovery from the coronavirus crisis while planning cuts to workers' rights that will affect the key workers who have kept the nation going through the pandemic.

We hope the prime minister will act on his warm promises of enhancing workers' rights, as now is the time when key workers on the front line need them the most.



SATOSHI KAMBAYASHI



**FBU FREEPHONE
LEGAL ADVICE
0808 100 6061
IN SCOTLAND
0800 089 1331**

WWW.THOMPSONSTRADITION.LAW/TRADE-UNIONS/FBU

WHAT LEGAL ADVICE IS AVAILABLE TO FBU MEMBERS?

The good news is that support for FBU members, as part of their union scheme, has not changed since the UK left the EU.

All FBU members will still have access to the following specialist legal services:

- Personal injury at or away from work, on holiday or on the roads
- Serious injury including brain and spinal cord injuries
- Industrial disease or illness
- Special terms for clinical negligence
- Employment law (accessed through the FBU)
- Criminal injury claims
- Free wills service, as well as special terms for lasting powers of attorney, re-mortgaging and conveyancing

FBU members using the legal service provided by Thompsons Solicitors will always keep 100 per cent of their compensation.

ACCESSING SUPPORT FROM THOMPSONS SOLICITORS

Thompsons Solicitors has been standing with unions and fighting for workers' rights for 100 years.

It has been using specialist expertise to protect the rights and interests of millions of trade union members across the UK since 1921.

Thompsons remains open throughout the pandemic, working from home and available to support FBU members in personal injury claims and (on referral from the union) employment matters.

■ For more information, visit Thompsons Solicitors' FBU hub.

TWEETS



Northants Fire #StayHomeSaveLives
@northantsfire

Incident 23:41 06/01/2021 - fire in living room caused by reptile mat - one of occupants couldn't wait to be rescued and jumped to safety to hitch a ride out!!



12:25 AM · Jan 8, 2021 · Twitter Web App

279 Retweets 56 Quote Tweets 1,436 Likes

LETTER



TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

A retired and out of trade (ROOT) member writes:

"I thought the whole content in the December/January issue of *Firefighter* was excellent, including the enlightening historical and international firefighter stories. Well done to the team!"

■ We welcome members' thoughts on the magazine. Please send your comments to firefighter@fbu.org.uk, including your name and membership number and whether or not you prefer to remain anonymous.

NEW
FROM
THE
FBU
SHOP



THE UNION FIREFIGHTER RANGE

New merchandise, all featuring a vintage USA cartoon from 1922. Available as a set or as individual items from: shop.fbu.org.uk
All FBU profits go to firefighters' good causes.

PRIORITISE YOUR FINANCES TO SECURE YOUR FINANCIAL FUTURE TODAY

We can help get your finances on track

Book your complimentary, no obligation initial consultation today

Call 08000 85 85 90 or email appointments@lighthousefa.co.uk now and book your complimentary, no obligation initial consultation with one of our professional financial advisers and quote FBAd2102 to a member of our team. We can help you with all aspects of your retirement planning, to successfully secure your financial future.



Lighthouse Financial Advice Limited is an appointed representative of Lighthouse Advisory Services Limited, which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.



STATION CAT FIRE AND ICE

ONE LAW FOR THEM ...

Your Cat is confused.

Everywhere she looks she sees nothing but praise for how firefighters have responded to the pandemic. It's in all the papers.

Then your Cat comes upon comments made by Zoe Billingham, Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services, condemning firefighters' response to the pandemic as "limited and delayed".

The irony of a former lawyer accusing fire service employers and unions of conducting long and complicated negotiations which, she claims, have prevented some firefighters from "maximising the support they could provide to the public", is not lost on your Cat.

Ms Billingham's comments were aimed at firefighters and the FBU who are responding to a national emergency made worse by the actions of her government paymasters.

No criticism from her of government dither and delay, just an attempt at political point scoring.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

It was heart-warming to learn Cumbria county council provided support for free school meals for nearly 12,000 children over Christmas, with Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service helping to distribute the food to families most in need.

This news came a matter of days after the old lounging lizard himself, William Rees-Mogg, accused the United Nations International



Food bank expert Jacob Rees-Mogg

Children's Emergency Fund of a "political stunt" when the UN agency stepped in to help feed deprived children in the UK.

This is the same Rees-Mogg who thinks the rise in the number of food banks in the UK is "rather uplifting".

The multi-millionaire Tory MP believes this increase shows Britain to be a "charitable nation". Apparently, the Conservatives are to be thanked for this.

Rees-Mogg told *The Independent* in 2017: "The real reason for the rise in numbers (of food banks) is because people know they are

there, and Labour refused to tell them."

Explaining the role of the Cumbria service in the distribution, watch manager Steve Johnson said: "CFRS are a big part of the community".

Rees-Mogg, your Cat suspects, is just a big part!

SWAN LOCH

Your Cat was heartened to see crowds applauding two Scottish firefighters over the New Year.

The dynamic duo had entered the frozen loch at Hogganfield in Glasgow to rescue a swan that had

Glasgow
firefighters free
a swan from ice
in a loch – see
Swan Loch

PICTURE: YOUTUBE



become trapped in ice. Efforts by the SFRS ensured the bird was eventually freed and transferred to the care of the Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

It's good to know that our firefighters are ready to wade into a frozen loch to help a swan. Perhaps it's a refreshing change from rescuing my friends from trees, roofs and other high places.

■ Watch the rescue at youtu.be/9_LIg4oCUmM

DREAM ON ...

Your Cat dreamt about government pay policy the other night.

She dozed off thinking about the £45,000 a year pay rise Boris Johnson gave his sacked adviser Dominic Cummings, most of it based on a "performance related" pay arrangement.

And what a performance Cummings had put in. Who can forget the side of a bus promising £350m a week extra for the NHS; a lockdown-breaking trip to County Durham; the ingenuity he showed in developing a new eye test; his Oscar-worthy performance in the Downing Street Rose Garden; his contribution to public confidence in the government; Princess La La Gate? And I could go on.

If 45 grand extra a year is what you get for a performance like that, what can firefighters and other public servants who have spent the past year keeping the public safe and battling a pandemic expect in the next pay round?

Well ... I said it was a dream.

25-YEAR BADGES



Simon Turner (r), East Hull, Humberside, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Gavin Marshall



Ian Marsters (l), Hull Central, Humberside, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Gavin Marshall



Paul Thomas (l), white watch, Bridgend, South Wales, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Sean Cayford



Stuart Bratley (r), green watch, Grangetown, Cleveland, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Davy Howe with watch comrades looking on



Phil Kelsey, white watch, Stockton, Cleveland, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Davy Howe with watch comrades looking on



Mike Barton (r), Kendal, Cumbria, receives his 25-year badge from branch chair Sam Taylforth



Brian Grundy (r), Kendal, Cumbria, receives his 25-year badge from branch chair Sam Taylforth



Phil Collinson (r), Kendal, Cumbria, receives his 25-year badge from branch chair Sam Taylforth



Jon Wallace (r), green watch, Hebburn, Tyne and Wear, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Holly Ferguson, with (l-r) Mal Young, Simon Forster and Darren Davies looking on



Andy Harris (l), North Yorkshire, receives his 25-year badge from Andy Brear on his final shift with colleagues looking on



Peter Hudson (r), Swalwell Fire Station, Tyne and Wear, receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair Brian Harris



Stu Simpson (l) Cleveland, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Davy Howe



Marty Allen (r), Cleveland, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Davy Howe (before social distancing)



Rob Knight (r), Fleetwood, Lancashire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Kev Wilkie with socially distanced colleagues looking on



Suzanne Monkhouse (r), white watch, Lancaster, receives her 25-year badge from branch secretary Craig White with watch colleagues looking on



Barry Sneddon (r), blue watch, Castlemilk, Glasgow, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary David Gillies



Tricia Crossan (r), blue watch, Castlemilk, Glasgow, receives her 25-year badge from branch secretary David Gillies



Steve Crabb (l), white watch, Middlemoor, Exeter, Devon and Somerset, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Pete Fogden



Kev Jones (r), Cleveland, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Davy Howe (before social distancing)



Bob Taylor (r), green watch, Gorton, Manchester, receives his 25-year badge from Gaz English, with colleagues looking on



Bryce Crawford (r), Crewe Toll, Edinburgh, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Ronnie Silverston



David Bannantyne (r), Crewe Toll, Edinburgh, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Ronnie Silverston



Tony McManus (r), blue watch, Crewe Toll, Edinburgh, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Ronnie Silverston



Kevin Boyle (r), Castlemilk, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary David Gillies



Brad Harrop (r), white watch, Barking, London, receives his 25-year badge from station rep Dave Bryan with watch members looking on

25-YEAR BADGES



Lee Mountain (r), white watch, West Hull, Humberside, receives his 25-year badge from station rep Lynden Young



Mike Tremellen (l), former FBU brigade chair, St Austell, Cornwall, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Gary Cotton



Catherine Withers (l), control, Avon, receives her 25-year badge from brigade organiser Amanda Mills



Paul 'Chuck' Yardley, white watch, Bridgend, South Wales, receives his 25-year badge with colleagues (l-r) Chris Smart, Sean Cayford (FBU rep), Tristan Bowen and Leigh Young



David Johnson (centre, l), incident command instructor, Tyne and Wear, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Holly Ferguson with colleagues Simon Johnson (l) and Brian Waugh looking on



Chris Hanson (r), Humberside, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Adam Hayton



Tony Trodden (r), red watch, Grangetown, Cleveland, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Davy Howe with watch comrades looking on



John Broadley (l), green watch, Bridlington, Humberside, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Stew Ball



Ian Bolton (l), red watch, Yeovil, Devon and Somerset, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Dan Gillard with watch colleagues



Steve Phoenix (r), Cleveland, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Davy Howe (taken before social distancing)



James Britton (l), and Steve Robinson (r), USAR, Avon, receive their 25-year badges from brigade organiser Amanda Mills



Paul Coles (r), Cleveland, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Davy Howe with station comrades looking on (before social distancing)

40-YEAR BADGE



Gary Price (l), Ipswich East, Suffolk, receives his 40-year badge from branch rep **Chris Willis** with colleagues (l-r) Glenn Saunders, Mark Cooper, Dan Davis and Simon Roberts looking on



Tony Fairclough (r), Liverpool City Centre, Merseyside, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep **Rich Shevlin** with colleagues (pre-Covid) looking on



Richard Hawkins (r), Bridlington, Humberside, receives his 25-year badge from general secretary **Matt Wrack** with colleagues looking on



Lance Gorton (r), Warwickshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary **Steve Rule**



Simon Jakeman (c), London region green rep, receives his 25-year badge from EC member **Dave Shek** (l) and London South West area secretary **Dave Young** at Hampton Court Palace



Ian Hemming (r), white watch, Loughton, Essex, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep **Steve Gill** with (l-r) Ray Hutson, Max Murfet, Keith Ray, Jamie Spiers and Adam Cooper

Please send high resolution digital files or prints to: firefighter@fbu.org.uk or Firefighter, FBU, 68 Coombe Road, Kingston upon Thames, KT2 7AE

For your image to look its best, we need the original, full-resolution image. One lifted from a website may not do justice to a unique occasion. We do our best with images that are low resolution, taken directly into a bright light or suffer from camera-shake, or have other problems, but cannot perform miracles. Please include details for each image – full names of everyone who is in it; their station/brigade/watch etc; where they are in the picture (eg: left to right); their union posts/branch if relevant; and where/when it was taken.

FBU REGIONAL OFFICES

Region 1 Scotland

52 St Enoch Square, Glasgow,
Scotland G1 4AA
0141 221 2309, 01rs@fbu.org.uk

Region 2 N Ireland

14 Bachelors Walk, Lisburn,
Co Antrim, BT28 1XJ
02892 664622, 02rs@fbu.org

Region 3 Cleveland, Durham,

Northumberland, Tyne & Wear
1 Carlton Court, 5th Avenue, Team
Valley, Gateshead, NE11 0AZ
0191 487 4142, 03rs@fbu.org.uk

Region 4 Yorks and Humberside

9 Marsh Street, Rothwell,
Leeds, LS26 0AG
0113 288 7000, 04rs@fbu.org.uk

Region 5 Greater Manchester, Lancs, Isle of Man, Cumbria, Merseyside, Cheshire

The Lighthouse, Lower Mersey St,
Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, CH65 2AL
0151 357 4400, 05rs@fbu.org.uk

Region 6 Derbyshire, Notts, Lincs, Leics, Northants

19-21 Musters Road, West Bridgford,
Nottingham NG2 7PP
0115 981 7489, Region06@fbu.org.uk

Region 7 West Mids, Staffs, Warks, Hereford & Worcester, Shropshire

195/7 Halesowen Rd, Old Hill,
West Midlands, B64 6HE
01384 413633, 07rs@fbu.org.uk

Region 8 Mid and West Wales, North Wales, South Wales

2nd floor, Hastings House, Fitzalan
Court, Cardiff, CF24 0BL
029 2049 6474

Region 9 Herts, Beds, Cambs, Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk

28 Atlantic Square, Station Road,
Witham, Essex, CM8 2TL
01376 521521, 09rs@fbu.org.uk

Region 10 London

John Horner Mews, Frome Street,
Islington, London, N1 8PB
020 7359 3638, london@fbu.org.uk

Region 11 Bucks, Berks, Hants, Oxon, Isle of Wight, Kent, Surrey, E Sussex, W Sussex

Unit 11, Hunns Mere Way,
Woodingdean, Brighton, BN2 6AH
11rs@fbu.org.uk

Region 12 Cornwall, Devon & Somerset, Avon, Gloucs, Wilts, Dorset

158 Muller Road, Horfield,
Bristol, BS7 9RE
0117 935 5132, 13rs@fbu.org.uk

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

ENGLAND, WALES AND N IRELAND

0800 089 1331

SCOTLAND

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.

T THOMPSONS
SOLICITORS



IN MEMORIAM

The firefighting family has always stood together in times of need – and it is no different when a colleague is injured or dies.

That is why the FBU has partnered with DONATE™, an online fundraising platform, to make it easier for you to support injured firefighters and bereaved families when they need it most.

Help your firefighters and donate to the causes below.



BRO CHRIS PAGE

On the morning of 5 January 2020, firefighter Chris Page sadly died after contracting COVID-19. Chris bravely served his community as a firefighter at Sandy fire station in Bedfordshire. He leaves behind a partner, close family, friends and comrades.

Help us to raise money in memory of Chris.

- To donate £1, text BROCPAGE to 70201
- To donate £3, text BROCPAGE to 70331
- To donate £5, text BROCPAGE to 70970
- To donate £10, text BROCPAGE to 70191

Donate online:
easydonate.org/BROCPAGE



Fundraising closes:
7 April 2021



BRO JAMES MORRIS

Firefighter James Morris, aged 39, sadly passed away on Tuesday 5 January following a long battle with kidney cancer. James was an on-call firefighter for 12 years and served his community at Lichfield fire station in Staffordshire and, more recently, Rugeley community fire station. James leaves behind his wife Eve, their three young children, family and friends.

All money raised will go towards a bench where Eve and his children can sit and remember him.

- To donate £1, text BROJM to 70201
- To donate £3, text BROJM to 70331
- To donate £5, text BROJM to 70970
- To donate £10, text BROJM to 70191

Donate online:
easydonate.org/BROJM



Fundraising closes:
18 April 2021



BRO ALEC ELWELL

Crew manager Alec Elwell, aged 48, sadly passed away on Saturday 16 January following a short battle with coronavirus. Alec joined London Fire Brigade in 2001 serving at Dowgate, Kentish Town and Bow stations, before transferring to Staffordshire in 2005. He served at Stafford, Rugeley, Cannock, Burton and recently took promotion at Hanley as a crew manager. Alec leaves behind his fiancée Kirsty and his two children Ellisia and Theo.

Help us to raise money in memory of Alec.

- To donate £1, text BROAE to 70201
- To donate £3, text BROAE to 70331
- To donate £5, text BROAE to 70970
- To donate £10, text BROAE to 70191

Donate online:
easydonate.org/BROAE



Fundraising closes:
20 April 2021