

FIREFIGHTER

FIREFIGHTERS



FIRE BRIGADES UNION CENTENARY 1918-2018

THE MAGAZINE OF THE FIRE BRIGADES UNION | WWW.FBU.ORG.UK | JUNE/JULY 2018

LEGAL VICTORY ON 96-HOUR SHIFTS

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WHY WE MUST DEFEND OUR INDEPENDENCE

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MATT WRACK

WE WILL CHALLENGE ATTACKS ON OUR HEROIC MEMBERS

GRENFELL – ONE YEAR ON

This June saw the first anniversary of the Grenfell Tower fire. The unprecedented, catastrophic and deadly incident saw firefighters, including the emergency control staff who took dreadfully distressing calls, act with courage, professionalism and dedication.

Firefighters rescued many people at great risk to themselves. Without their remarkable response, many more would have perished in that fire.

It is absolutely disgusting, then, that as the public inquiry into the atrocity opened, firefighters were being slurred and denigrated in the media. We were first in the firing line.

Armchair critics like the *London Review of Books* writer Andrew O'Hagan suggested that "the firefighting effort wasn't all that it could have been". *Sunday Times* deputy editor Sarah Baxter seemed upset that no firefighters died in the tower with an article headlined "Jobs worths won and Grenfell lives were lost".

There was even an outrageous suggestion from Imran Khan, a lawyer at the inquiry, that the firefighting effort may have been affected by racism – that firefighters might have acted differently because of the diversity of the people who lived in the tower. That suggestion is offensive, wrong and destructive.

I am entirely confident that those taking emergency calls, the firefighters and officers attending the incident did their utmost on the night and at the incident to save as many lives as they could.



Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn at the first public appearance of the FBU's mobile centenary exhibition at the union conference in Brighton

Regrettably, they operated in an impossible situation because the fire was on such an unprecedented scale.

It is appalling that Grenfell firefighters are being denigrated in this way. We are all aware that the inquiry will be a difficult and traumatic process, to be conducted without fear or favour and without undue preference to vested interests including those of the fire service.

But we will take on and challenge any attacks on the people who did everything they possibly could to save lives in an impossible situation.

We await the findings of the public inquiry, but it has been clear from the earliest accounts of that night that firefighters faced an unprecedented catastrophe and they responded by going above and beyond the call of duty.

Normal working procedures that are in place

to keep firefighters as safe as possible at incidents could not be applied. Firefighters adapted what they did in order to maximise the number of people they could rescue. I, and many other people throughout the world, would call those actions heroic.

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

Post-traumatic stress disorder is a condition that can occur weeks, months or even years after an incident.

At anniversaries of major incidents, like Grenfell or the Manchester Arena bombings, there will be plenty of images and stories that may trigger unpleasant flashbacks. If you are experiencing this, please seek help in the first instance. There is nothing to be ashamed of in accessing treatment.

On the health page (P18) of this issue we look at PTSD and what action you can take if you feel yourself

or any of your colleagues might be going through this.

CONFERENCE

The huge significance of Grenfell was reflected in our discussion on the issue at our conference in Brighton.

In my 35 years in this union I have never experienced such a powerful and moving debate and all those who contributed are a credit to our profession, our service and our union.

We will place the record of the day on our website as soon as possible.

This year the conference was, in part, a celebration of our union reaching 100 years old. Our exhibition looking back at the past ten decades of FBU history had its first outing at conference and had a terrific response from all who visited it. It will be touring throughout the UK over the next year. Be sure to check it out.



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FBU CENTENARY EXHIBITION AT UKRO CHALLENGE IN CARDIFF

Bridgend extrication team (above), from South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, are the current World Rescue Organisation and United Kingdom Rescue Organisation (UKRO) champions.

The next UKRO challenge

takes place in Cardiff from 27 to 29 September. The FBU's mobile centenary exhibition will be at the games in the heart of Cardiff Bay.

Steve Apter, chair of UKRO, says that the challenge will offer competitors the "highest

standard of learning opportunity and is a great platform to display the exceptional skill of services from across the UK."

■ For more information contact regional secretary Cerith Griffiths – Cerith.Griffiths@fbu.org.uk

FIREFIGHTER

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GRENFELL – INQUIRY

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GRENFELL – FBU

Union pulls together to ensure no firefighter is unsupported at police interviews p6

FBU LEGAL VICTORY RULES 96-HOUR SHIFTS ILLEGAL

CLOSE PROXIMITY CREWING

The High Court has ruled in favour of the FBU by declaring that a duty system requiring firefighters to work 96-hour shifts is unlawful.

The case centred on a duty system operated by South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service known as close proximity crewing (CPC), but the judgement could affect dozens of fire and rescue services that operate similar shift systems.

The judgement, by the Honourable Mr Justice Kerr, was handed down at Manchester High Court and stated that: “CPC in the form used in South Yorkshire does not and cannot operate in accordance with (Working Time) regulations.”

Justice Kerr concluded: “I do not see how the CPC system as it exists at the four fire stations in South Yorkshire, can operate lawfully in compliance with regulation.”

Of South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority’s actions, the judgement states: “the illegality is continuing and there is a concerted plan [by the respondent] to continue the unlawful conduct”. It went on to say: “I am troubled that the stance of the Authority and the Service offers an affront to the rule of law”.

Andy Dark, assistant general secretary of the FBU, said: “This was an important ruling and a tremendous success for the union. Firefighters often carry out long and arduous work under



Andy Dark: An important ruling and a tremendous success for the union

dangerous conditions. A shift lasting 96 hours is unacceptable.

“We expect the fire service to return the affected personnel to the negotiated 2-2-4 duty system as soon as possible.”

The FBU won employment tribunal

cases for 60 members who were forcibly displaced from their stations when the duty system was introduced.

Ian Murray, FBU president, said: “CPC is a duty system that strikes at the heart of trade unionism by selling jobs for personal gain.

“It has been a long, difficult slog, but one which has ended with one of the most significant victories the union has won in recent years.

“Hopefully this will be the catalyst for eradicating CPC or similar draconian duty systems.”

'THE ILLEGALITY IS CONTINUING AND THERE IS A CONCERTED PLAN [BY THE RESPONDENT] TO CONTINUE THE UNLAWFUL CONDUCT ... I AM TROUBLED THAT THE STANCE OF THE AUTHORITY AND THE SERVICE OFFERS AN AFFRONT TO THE RULE OF LAW'

MEMBERS VOTE BY 9 TO 1 TO BACK STRIKE ACTION OVER CONTRACTS

WEST MIDLANDS

Firefighters in the West Midlands have voted by a margin of 9 to 1 for strike action in a dispute over the imposition of contracts on new entrants to the service.

The ballot resulted in a 90% vote for strike action on an 82% turnout.

The FBU said that the West Midlands Fire Authority should listen to its firefighters and withdraw the contracts immediately.

Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary, said: "This is an overwhelming result. It shows the huge strength of feeling among firefighters and emergency control staff in the West Midlands.

"It is time to wipe the slate clean and bin these disgraceful contracts

right now. Now is the time for the chief fire officer and politicians on the fire authority to listen."

Andrew Scattergood, chair of the FBU in the West Midlands, said: "Our members have made it clear that these contracts are completely unacceptable and should be withdrawn.

"Firefighters do not vote for strike action easily. These contracts are bad for the fire service, firefighters and the public they serve."

The FBU said the new contracts exploit the newest employees in the service and would mean that they would have to take on any work outside the agreed role of a firefighter that the service dictates. The employer could make such changes without negotiation with the union.



Sue Offland among the FBU members at a control staff lobby of Parliament in 2009

A FANTASTIC SISTER AND TRADE UNIONIST

SUE OFFLAND

Former FBU control rep Sue Offland has died at the age of 60.

Joining Merseyside fire brigade in 1979, she soon found her calling representing FBU control members.

She served as the North West regional control rep from 1993 to 2003 before becoming secretary of the union's control staff national committee (CSNC) until 2016.

In that time she played a key role in defeating the government's FiReControl project.

At the union's 1999 conference, Sue delivered a fierce rebuke to politicians who had no understanding of the



extraordinary work that FBU members do.

"They are not interested in what it is really like to face danger, cold, wet, hot, in ill-fitting uniforms, to have death in your hands," she told conference.

"They do not know what it is like for control staff, for their health, for the stress, the understaffing, about the

calls that we hear, the ear piercing screams that we have to live with, the memories; all they want is us to give up. Never. Never will this Fire Brigades Union give up."

Many people paid tribute to Sue after her death. Denise Christie, FBU regional secretary for Scotland, said: "Sue was a fantastic sister and trade unionist who championed firefighter control members and made it clear that they, too, are the frontline of the fire service.

"I met Sue at the FBU's women's school and have many fond memories of her."

Sue leaves behind husband Peter and children Jack and Jessica.

SOUNDING OFF

GDPR is here. Your mailbox may have less spam, but what does it mean for trade unions, asks FBU data protection officer Bridget Jackson

BOSSES' GDPR SMOKESCREEN

Some employers are using new data protection laws to stop union reps gaining access to information they are entitled to. For example, refusing to hand over accident reports or not sharing safety audits with reps on the grounds that they contain personal data.

I suggest that this is a deliberate attempt to prevent reps getting the information they need to carry out their duties.

If faced with a refusal like this, reps should cite the HSE Code of Practice and the 1977 Safety Reps and Safety Committee Regulations that are crystal clear – employers must supply union safety representatives with the information needed to fulfil their functions.

GDPR does not change the information that can be given to union H&S reps. It simply reiterates the previous requirement for consent or, where consent is withheld, for anonymisation.

H&S reps are still entitled to information on injuries, near misses and occupational diseases.

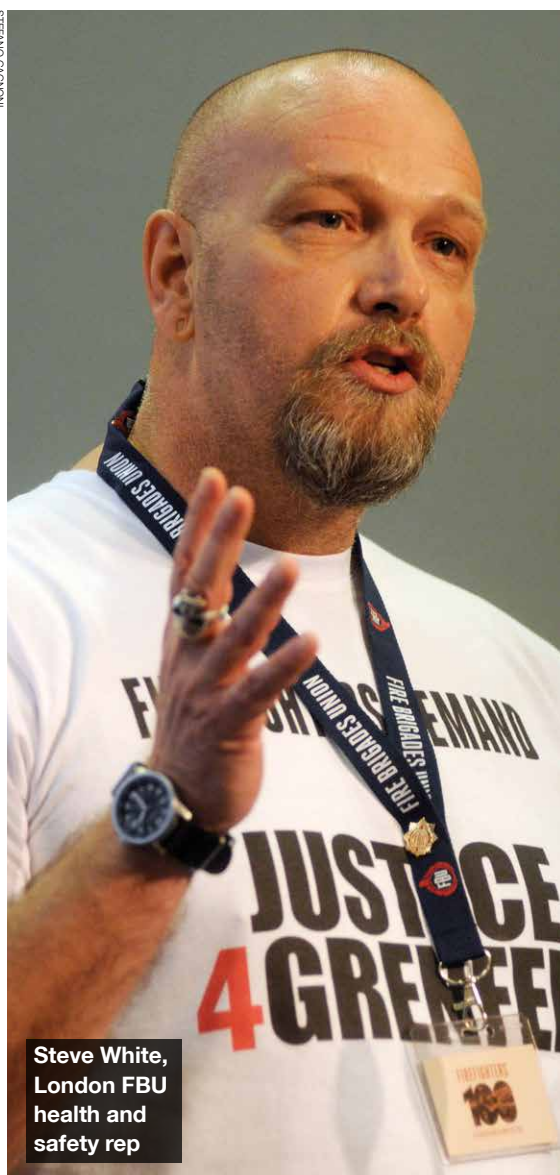
None of this is meant to imply that GDPR will not affect safety representatives. When handling personal or membership data or details of incidents this information (whether electronic or paper) must be kept secure.

Regulation 4A2 of the SRSC Regulations gives reps the power to demand the facilities to carry out their role effectively, which suggests that H&S reps can demand, as a minimum, a lockable filing cabinet or other secure facilities to store data.

Bear in mind that, if your employer is refusing to give out data under GDPR, then either they should not have given it out in the first place or they are hiding behind a smoke screen created by GDPR.



STEFANO CAGNONI



Steve White,
London FBU
health and
safety rep

FBU PULLS TOGETHER FOR GRENFELL FIREFIGHTERS

A joint effort by the FBU has ensured that all firefighters to respond to Grenfell have a union official present during their police interviews.

The interviews are part of the police investigation into the fire.

London reps have been joined by FBU reps from across the UK as well as retired officials to ensure that, at every interview, members have union representation.

Steve White, London FBU health and safety rep, thanked colleagues.

“An investigation of this magnitude means everyone had to dig in to ensure we could cover every interview,” he said. “Thank you to everyone who volunteered their time.”

While a majority of interviews have been completed, some are still outstanding.



FBU conference
delegates observe a
minute's silence for the
victims of Grenfell

STEFANO CAGNONI

INQUIRY OPENS WITH TRIBUTES TO VICTIMS

The opening day of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry saw loved ones pay heart-breaking and at times emotional tributes to the victims of the disaster.

Some tributes lasted just minutes, others much longer.

The Gomes family, on the 21st floor, were rescued by firefighters but, as a result of the fire, Andreia Gomes' son Logan was tragically still-born.

Unite union member Dennis Murphy lived on the 14th floor. His sister, Anne-Marie, read a statement for the family recalling how Dennis had spoken by phone to her and his son, Peter, at 2:52am

as fire engulfed the tower.

Mother and daughter Mary Mendy and Khadija Saye lived on the 20th floor. Khadija was an artist on the cusp of success. The inquiry was shown a video of her first exhibition in Venice. She had been planning to take her mother to the next exhibition later that summer. A trip neither would get to take.

Inquiry chair Sir Martin Moore Bick paid tribute to the bravery and eloquence of those talking about their loved ones.

It is hoped that, through the inquiry, he delivers justice for all the Grenfell victims.

CLADDING FIRM 'GAMED' FIRE TESTING SYSTEM

A BBC TV Panorama investigation has revealed that the company behind the insulation used on Grenfell Tower used a different, more fire retardant, version of the cladding to qualify for a safety certificate.

The more flammable version of the insulation was then sold to customers. The product, known as Celotex RS5000 insulation, has been used on hundreds of other buildings throughout the country.

The FBU said the findings were “beyond shocking”.

Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary, said: “The current regime of regulation and testing of materials used in the construction industry has been shown to be a complete and utter failure.

“This is just one product. How many other types of material have managed to pass fire safety tests while posing a threat to life? The entire fire testing regime needs to be redesigned urgently if we are to avoid another Grenfell.”



Justice4Grenfell campaigners toured the streets of London in three billboard vans earlier this year to pose a question about the establishment reaction to the disaster

PICTURES: JUSTICE4GRENFELL (JUSTICE4GRENFELL.ORG, @OFFICIALJ4G)

WHY THE FBU BELIEVES THE GRENFELL INQUIRY IS PROBLEMATIC

When Theresa May set up the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, she claimed that “no stone will be left unturned”.

Inquiry chair Sir Martin Moore-Bick pledged to “discover the truth about what happened at Grenfell Tower, so that we can learn lessons for the future and ensure that a tragedy of this kind never happens again.”

One year on, the FBU is not convinced that the establishment will ever keep those promises.

Progress has been miserable:

- Half of the bereaved, residents and survivors have not been permanently rehoused, despite promises that every single household would be within a year
- More than 300 high-rise buildings in England, half of

them social housing, still have dangerous cladding on them

- The Hackitt report on building regulations failed to suggest a ban on flammable cladding
- The public inquiry has only just started to hear testimony. Earlier inquiries, such as King’s Cross, had fully reported within a year of the event.

Ministers must get a grip on the Grenfell process or face a whirlwind of anger.

The FBU wants a wide-ranging public inquiry, not a whitewash, yet the judge explicitly excluded “questions of a social, economic and political” nature.

Central government

created the housing and fire safety regime and must be held to account for any failings in it, yet the inquiry appears designed to avoid this. “We cannot allow the blame to be placed everywhere else but Whitehall,” says FBU general secretary Matt Wrack.

The FBU has raised concerns about some of the inquiry’s expert witnesses, including Steve McGuirk.

He was a chief fire officer in two brigades during the so-called modernisation period after 2004 when the whole fire safety regime was turned upside down and a leading figure in the Chief Fire Officers Association

which supported the “safe enough” position and other deregulatory measures.

The prime minister and the judge must listen to those immediately affected by the fire, principally the residents and survivors around Grenfell Tower, the FBU has argued.

“It means listening to the firefighters deeply affected by this tragedy,” says Matt Wrack.

“The inquiry must also investigate wider matters of public concern, including the role of central government and of the fire and rescue service as a whole.

“It must ensure that blame is not pushed down on to those individuals immediately involved, while the big decision takers at the top of central government get away scot-free.”

‘WE CANNOT ALLOW THE BLAME TO BE PLACED EVERYWHERE ELSE BUT WHITEHALL’

REMEMBERING GRENFELL

Delegates and guests at the FBU conference in Brighton stand to honour the people who died in the Grenfell Tower disaster





FBU CONFERENCE 2018

Delegates met in Brighton in June for the FBU annual conference and there was no way anybody could leave without knowing that it was the union's centenary. From international guests, high profile politicians, live immersive experiences to movie screenings – it was a busy four days. Here is *Firefighter's* round up.



LABOUR LEADERS RALLY CONFERENCE

Party leader Jeremy Corbyn promised in his address to conference that a future Labour government would recruit a new generation of firefighters, lift the pay cap, tighten up building regulations and stop police and crime commissioners running fire services.

"The Labour Party is committed to recruiting 3,000 new firefighter jobs with a full review of staffing levels and the implementation of a statutory duty to respond to flooding in England as well as elsewhere in the UK," he told delegates.

"All of this is essential if we are to improve response times and ensure you as firefighters and officers have the resources that you need to do your job of keeping the public safe.

"We are absolutely clear that this must be part of a co-ordinated approach across government. A strong focus on fire safety and fire prevention, along with a well-funded, fully staffed and independent fire and rescue service that is not governed by police and crime commissioners but has its own governance arrangements that will allow you to get on with your jobs.

"You do a fantastic job but you can't have emergency services on the cheap. We will raise corporation tax to the level it was in 2010 to pay for better public services. That's what Labour will do."

Later, shadow chancellor John McDonnell gave unequivocal support to the West Midlands firefighters who have recently voted for strike action over new, imposed contracts for new entrants requiring them to take on any work the service signs them up too.

"It is not for anyone in the Labour Party to be ripping up contracts," he told conference.



Jeremy Corbyn
(top): Lift the
pay cap



John McDonnell:
Full support for West
Midlands firefighters

FIREFIGHTERS DEMAND JUSTICE FOR GRENFELL VICTIMS

Grenfell was the shadow that hung over conference. In a session devoted to the tragedy that was at times raw and emotional, delegates called for politicians "at the very top" to be held accountable for the decisions that led to the disaster.

In his first speech to conference since being elected president, Ian Murray blamed the "systematic deregulation by successive governments that led to the horrendous tragedy" calling it "completely avoidable".

FBU general secretary Matt Wrack said the disaster should herald a "complete change of direction" over privatisation, regulations and the funding of public services.

Wrack said deregulation of buildings and cuts to safety inspections had created the conditions for Grenfell.

"The Grenfell Tower fire was a crime. Those people at the top of government and the system they created should be held to account, not just the subcontractors who screwed cladding to the side of the building.

"The whole regime needs to be examined. They have created a system of negligent and frankly criminal complacency.

"We cannot allow those at the very top to get away."

Delegates all wore t-shirts bearing the message: "Firefighters demand Justice 4 Grenfell".



FBU general secretary Matt Wrack addresses the FBU conference in Brighton

PICTURES
STEFANO CAGNONI

Moyra Samuels from the Justice 4 Grenfell campaign told the conference that she had been shocked to discover how much combustible material there had been inside and outside the building.

“Grenfell was a death trap. How could that level of combustible material be put in somebody’s house? I am baffled.”

She added that the community would not get justice unless those responsible for the causes of the fire were prosecuted.

Earlier in the week Jeremy Corbyn told conference: “People are still angry about the government’s failure to act. Where is the necessary overhaul of fire safety regulations that is so clearly needed? Where is extra funding for the Fire and Rescue Service? Where is the action on dangerous cladding on other buildings?”

“This government failed to act. But even now, in the wake of 72 dead at Grenfell, they still ignore the advice of the FBU.”

Of the firefighters who responded to the inferno, the Labour leader said: “Those men and women who went into that building to save lives are heroes as are all firefighters who regularly go above and beyond in order save lives.”



Moyra Samuels: (top) Grenfell fire was a crime



Gary Keary: Firefighters unable to support their families

NEXT FEW MONTHS 'CRUCIAL' TO FIREFIGHTER PAY

Conference was updated on discussions the union was having on pay. A series of meetings with national employers and ministers across the UK are scheduled in the coming weeks.

General secretary Matt Wrack did not rule out strike action if there was no movement on pay.

“Measures are in place to potentially resolve the concerns we have about pay”, he told conference.

“The next few months will be crucial if we are able to make progress. If not we will return to consultation through the union’s structures”.

During the pay debate Gary Keary of Greater Manchester told delegates: “We have been patient. We have entered into trials of changes in working practices, in return for a centrally funded pay rise. Firefighters are now sometimes unable fully and adequately to support their families.”

Lucy Masoud of London said: “The day after the Grenfell fire, the Prime Minister talked of the firefighters’ heroism. Just ten days later, Tory MPs were cheering because they had succeeded in holding down our pay. It shows the contempt this government has for firefighters and other public sector workers.”





FBU general secretary Matt Wrack presents TUC leader Frances O'Grady with a centenary memento

O'GRADY: CRITICS NOT FIT TO LACE YOUR BOOTS

TUC general secretary Frances O'Grady paid tribute to firefighters and chastised critics after a string of attacks in the media over responses to Grenfell and the Manchester Arena bombing.

"Given the Eton code of dishonour that dominates British elites, I knew it wouldn't be long before someone tried to pin the blame on firefighters," she said in her speech to conference.

"Just as we saw some of them turn on firefighters in the wake of the Manchester attacks.

"In my view, those who criticise FBU members are not fit to lace your boots.

"We need to hold to account those who are really responsible, whether that's corporations, regulators, the government, the landlord or the boss."

UNION TO LAUNCH 'STOP THE ROT' CAMPAIGN

"Huge cuts are leaving a trail of devastation the like of which we have never seen before," FBU general secretary Matt Wrack told conference as delegates voted to kick start a nationwide anti-cuts campaign.

The 'Stop the Rot' campaign will call for a halt to budget cuts, investment in fire and rescue services, the recruitment of a new generation of firefighters and demand high-quality national standards.

The campaign will also have a significant focus on response times, including research into how improved response times can reduce deaths and injuries.

"These cuts have continued despite the remarkable work by firefighters at Grenfell as well as terror attacks and floods," Wrack said. "They have continued despite the work we do to keep our communities safe.

"We need to strengthen our campaign against fragmentation at national and local level.

"We need every delegate to organise that campaign – literally a matter of life and death for our communities and our union."

Denise Christie of Scotland said: "Every day in Scotland between 60 to 100 appliances are off the run because there aren't the firefighters there to crew them.

"We were promised no cuts, but they have come thick and fast."

FBU HELD IN HIGH REGARD ACROSS THE WORLD

FBU members were praised by international allies, with Harold Schaitberger, leader of the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) in the United States and Canada, saying UK firefighters were not the least bit "braggadocious".

"You're an understated lot, you don't look for the spotlight, you don't call or see yourselves as heroes as others often do," he told conference.

Peter Marshall, national secretary of the United Firefighters Union of Australia (UFUA), praised the work of the FBU. "Globally, firefighters are watching your union and we're proud to be part of that network with your union," he said.

"We've been watching in admiration, pride and horror the Grenfell tragedy. But who protects the protectors?

"The FBU has been protecting the protectors.

"Future generations of firefighters will be indebted because of the sacrifice that you and previous generations of your union have made."

100 YEARS THAT SHAPED FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

We are the Fire Brigades Union – the
of frontline firefighters. Founded in 1918,
speaking-up for firefighters to

Our members, past and present, have
together for one hundred years
of our communities and

We represent the over 100,000
rescue service personnel across
stations, handling 999 calls
in training departments,
other essential parts of

In 2018 and beyond, we will
come and reflecting on the
past to guide us in shaping
of the future.

This exhibition is a showcase
history and a celebration
in protecting communities



1910s



1918

FORMING A UNION FOR FIREFIGHTERS



WE'VE
COME
A
LONG
WAY
SINCE
THE
BRASS
HELMET

Labour leader Jeremy
Corbyn visits the
conference exhibition

MENTAL HEALTH: A KEY ISSUE FOR THE FIRE SERVICE

The FBU has adopted a series of
measures to tackle mental health
issues in the fire service.

They include lobbying employers
to implement national standards for
dealing with mental health issues
that firefighters and emergency
control operators may have.

In one contribution, Jamie
Devey of Surrey told conference
that two colleagues in his brigade
had taken their lives. "This shook
the whole service and will continue
to rock the service for some time,"
he said.

"I find it very hard that the only
choice for my two Surrey comrades
was to end their lives.

"A broken arm and leg is hard
to hide, a broken mind is hidden.
Mental health has never been so
important."

Kate Scott of the control staff
national committee highlighted
how increased workloads and lack
of staff and resources are affecting
the mental health of control room
staff who answer emergency calls.

She said: "There may be a
reduction in incident numbers on
the ground, but the number of calls
has actually increased."



Top: Jamie Devey

Middle:
Harold Schaitberger

Below: Claire Hudson

CENTENARY EXHIBITION MAKES FIRST OUTING

A travelling exhibition
charting 100 years of fire
service and union history
had its first outing on the
Brighton seafront.

The project was commis-
sioned by the FBU and saw live
events company People
Creative donate £200,000
worth of free time to create
the immersive experience.

Visitors can chart the
history of the union, learn
more about its members
and listen to a call to a fire
control operator.

Jeremy Corbyn said the
exhibition was "marvellous"
in a visit scheduled for 10
minutes but which lasted for
more than a half hour.

The Labour leader was
thrilled. Less so were his
media team waiting for
him outside. The exhibition
will be travelling across the
country at events throughout
the year.

■ [www.fbu.org.uk/
history/events](http://www.fbu.org.uk/history/events)

PPE STILL FAILING WOMEN FIREFIGHTERS

Fire services are failing to
provide women firefighters
with PPE that fits properly,
leaving them at increased
risk of injury.

The FBU will put pressure
on employers to ensure all
firefighters have access to
suitable PPE workwear.

Claire Hudson of the
FBU national women's
committee explained
how testing on male and
female dummies had found
significant differences in the
type of burn injuries each
suffered, despite wearing the
same equipment.

COME FOR THE POLICIES, LEAVE WITH FAMILY

A family reunion took
place when Kate Scott
(control) and Mark Ames
(officers) discovered they
were second cousins. Kate
had recognised Mark's
surname in Firefighter's
25-year badges pages.
Meeting at conference, they
discovered that they share
a great grandmother.

DEFEND THE INDEPENDENCE

As more police, fire and crime commissioners are announced, FBU national officer **Dave Green** explains the union's opposition to people elected to run the police service taking over the fire service

The Policing and Crime Act 2017 allows police and crime commissioners (PCCs) in England and Wales to take over the governance of fire and rescue services.

From the outset the FBU has opposed this land-grab by PCCs and the effective blurring of the distinction between the role of the fire and rescue service and that of the police service.

Ours is a service that prides itself on reaching into every community and providing a humanitarian service to whoever asks for it. The role of the police is distinct from and crucially different to that of firefighters.

Police officers are warranted with the power of arrest and so, regrettably, are not welcome in many of the areas where the fire service can open doors.

WORKING CONDITIONS

The union believes that the perception of a PCC striving to drive the two distinct services together could adversely affect the service that firefighters provide to the public. It would also damage the functioning and reputation of the fire and rescue service, diminish local democracy and potentially worsen firefighters' working conditions.

A police and crime commissioner can take over a fire and rescue service if they can demonstrate to Westminster that the takeover will meet the test of "economy, efficiency, effectiveness and public safety". This is all but a pretence to force through PCC takeovers at the whim of Tory ministers.

The country's first Police Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) is Roger

Hirst, appointed in Essex in October last year.

In March this year, the Home Office granted Cambridgeshire, Staffordshire and West Mercia PCCs control of fire and rescue in their areas. They were approved following "independent" assessments by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy. Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service is fighting the move and is set to challenge the Home Office decision.

In April, the Home Office announced that Northamptonshire

PCC Stephen Mold, would become the fifth PFCC. The momentum is not stopping. Lancashire, North Yorkshire and Norfolk are at real threat of adopting joint governance.

The union recognises that there is little faith in the current fire authority set-up. It is difficult to defend a system that in England has seen metropolitan areas, combined fire authorities and county councils cut the service to ribbons and, it would appear, do little to challenge Westminster government cuts to central funding.



ENCE OF OUR SERVICE



GEOFF GRANDFIELD

PCCs who make promises about defending the frontline and protecting firefighters may seem to offer an attractive sales pitch. But beware of politicians promising to change our world, they are not what they seem.

There are three governance models open to a PCC wanting to take over a fire and rescue service:

■ **Representation** – Keep the two services separate but allow the PCC to sit on the fire and rescue authority to participate in strategic decisions on the fire service's future

BEWARE OF
POLITICIANS PROMISING
TO CHANGE OUR
WORLD, THEY ARE NOT
WHAT THEY SEEM

■ **Governance** – Keep the two services operationally and financially independent but place fire and rescue under the direct governance of the PCC

■ **Single employer** – Merge the services under the strategic governance of the PCC and the operational command of a chief officer.

It is important for the FBU to campaign against the single employer model. We cannot allow PCCs to delegate fire functions to a single chief officer for policing and fire, integrate senior management teams and harmonise conduct and complaints systems, terms and conditions.

PRINCIPLED OPPOSITION

So while we maintain our principled opposition to PCC takeovers of fire and rescue services during any consultations, we recognise that joint governance arrangements are in place in some areas of the country and we will seek to work with the PCCs in order to get the best deal for members.

The FBU has highlighted a number of other key threats that officials need to negotiate on to protect members. These include:

■ Opposition to the single employer model, which could permit increasingly integrated police and fire services including combined senior management, common complaints and conduct systems, and joint support services and could seriously undermine firefighters' terms and conditions

■ NJC terms and conditions (including role maps)

■ Non-warranted policing activities

■ Dual fire and police control operators

■ Redundancies and a reduction in the establishment

■ Downgrading pumps and stations

■ Privatisation

■ So-called efficiency savings from firefighters diverted to other work.

The FBU will continue to seek the best for our members. It will continue its campaign to secure the best conditions, pay, and governance structure for members and the communities they serve. The FBU opposes the slippery slope to PCC control.



TUC tutor Julie Weekes

There was something rather special about the FBU women's school in the union's centenary year. Women in the union have been gathering at Wortley Hall near Sheffield to learn and network every year since the late nineties.

Now the school – which has done much to nurture activism among FBU women – was celebrating its twenty-first birthday.

A record 74 women arrived for an intensive weekend of workshops and presentations at the 'Trade Union Stately Home'. The motto on the women's committee banner in main sessions sums up the spirit of women's school: "Ask for What You Want – And Be Prepared To Get It".

Many women within and beyond the FBU cite attending an FBU women's school as a starting point for getting actively involved in the union. The excellent crèche ensures mothers do not miss out.

Women from different ranks, roles and regions have always made up the school's winning mix. But this year, there were many more "first-timers". Sam Rye, FBU national women's committee secretary, said it was encouraging that women "early on in their careers now feel confident to come".

In the pioneering days it was not that easy – and there are still pockets of scepticism about why women need their own school. But in the age of growing outrage over the gender pay gap, #metoo, equality has certainly gone mainstream.

It was Islington firefighter Abigail Lagna's first time at women's school. She found it empowering and is keen to get more involved – glad she swapped retail management for firefighting 18 months ago.

She has found male colleagues on her watch encouraging and supportive.

Lisa Bear, another first-timer, works



A HISTORY OF

Members taking part in this year's FBU women's school had two anniversaries to celebrate.
Helen Hague talked to them about what they get from the school

in human resources and is a retained firefighter in Shropshire and now FBU women's rep for the county. She's keen to counter the opinion that "the union only looks after wholetime".

Monique Hollinshead, a costume designer and retained firefighter from Audlem in Cheshire, a women's school regular, is now union rep at the station – representing eight male colleagues, including "three blokes called Steve". She would love to see more women signing up "but without getting rid of any Steves, of course".

Sherri Kitson, branch rep for control staff in Cheshire, works at North West fire control in Warrington. For the past four years it has handled all fire calls from Cheshire, Lancashire, Greater Manchester and Cumbria, fuelling fears of privatisation.

This was Sherri's second time at women's school. Returning from



ACTIVISM ...

maternity leave and meeting up with control colleagues first time round made her “realise I had to get more involved”.

She is now control rep for FBU Region 5, North West England – and was due to speak on “ensuring every control room remains under local fire authority control” at annual conference.

Last year Jo Foot, a firefighter from High Wycombe, spoke at conference for the first time, speaking out for the apprentice firefighters Buckinghamshire FRS and others have started to recruit. “They must not be brought in on the cheap,” she said.

Brigade organiser for the past five years, she has recently taken on the role of education and learning organiser for the Southern England region.

Sheffield watch manager Nicola Hobbs has played in goal for Barnet Bees in London – imagine the commute – but wants to play closer to home. Brigade rep



Micky Turner GMC

and LGBT rep for Region 4, Yorkshire and Humberside, she says these roles play a vital role in shaping policies on maternity, and the menopause – and boosts confidence.

Brigade rep Kirsty Wright went to women’s school for the first time two



Denise Christie and Sam Rye



Workshop

years ago. She was back as women’s rep for South Yorkshire, keen to learn more on union courses to best represent members.

As FBU general secretary Matt Wrack told the school, women members are over four times more likely to access courses to help them represent colleagues and build the union than male colleagues (22 to 5 per cent.)

Women’s school has a history of nurturing activism – from improving life on station to campaigning against cuts.

Former firefighters and women’s school leaders Vicky Knight and Kerry Baigent were back to celebrate. Vicky, now a lecturer, is newly elected president of the University and College Union and chairs the TUC women’s committee.

Kerry, now an organiser with UNISON, is intent on getting a better deal for low-paid workers in the South West. National Women’s Committee stalwart Denise Christie is regional secretary of the FBU in Scotland and Sam Rye serves on the TUC women’s committee.

With the rising generation of new activists at women’s school, the FBU looks set to benefit from a fresh wave of engaged trade unionists. In these challenging times, active and engaged trade unionists are just what are needed to help get a better deal – for all members and, of course, the public they serve.

POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

A CONDITION THAT CAN BE YEARS IN THE MAKING

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a condition that can occur weeks, months or even years after an incident.

At anniversaries of major incidents, like Grenfell or the Manchester Arena bombings, there will be plenty of images and stories that may trigger unpleasant flashbacks. With that in mind, what is it you need to be on the lookout for when judging if you, or a colleague, has PTSD?

Christian Hughes, an NHS counsellor specialising in treating post-traumatic stress disorder, has pinpointed the following as factors that FBU members should be watching out for:

- Intrusive memories, flashbacks, or nightmares.
- Difficulty sleeping and concentrating, feeling jumpy, and being easily irritated and angered.
- Avoiding places, people, and activities that are reminders of the event.
- Ruminating about the event as though our mind is trying to find a different outcome.
- Emotional numbness.

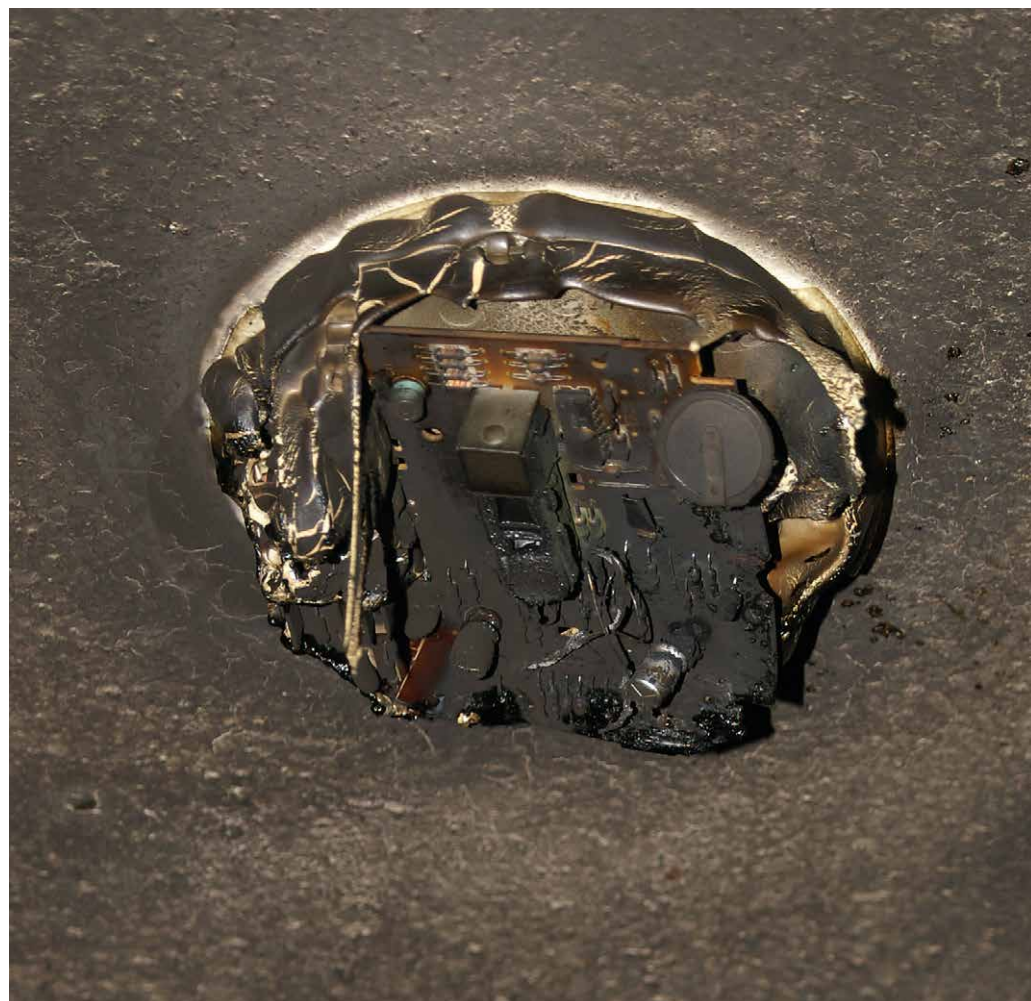
Unable to feel very much at all and struggling to connect with the people and activities that we value.

Mr Hughes says he has worked with many people who have been affected by terrifying life-threatening events like Grenfell.

RUNNING INTO DANGER

"I have worked with emergency workers and first responders who have courageously put others ahead of themselves by running into danger to save lives," he said.

"The Grenfell fire was historic in its scale and, sadly, many of the people affected



will be the firefighters who put themselves in harm's way.

"That is why caring for yourself and your colleagues is vital after such an event. The mental health of you and your colleagues is as important as the maintenance of your equipment in keeping you safe, well and effective. You are best placed to notice any changes in yourself, or those around you, following an event like Grenfell.

"Staying alert to changes can mean getting help early, minimising distress and reducing the impact on individual's lives and the functioning of your team.

"Many people will feel

shaken for up to a month after a life-threatening event like Grenfell, but if things are not settling, noticing the signs it is turning into something more serious, like PTSD, is vital."

THERAPY SERVICE

If you notice any of these difficulties then help is available. Your GP can refer you, or you may be able to self-refer, to a local NHS psychological therapy service.

You can find the details on the NHS Choices website [www.nhs.uk] along with more details about PTSD and other mental health conditions.

Do not suffer in silence, the

sooner you get access to help the sooner you can be helped.

A growing number of fire and rescue staff are being supported by the Fire Fighters Charity. More than 5,000 people visit the charity's support centres each year and about 40% go for psychological support, its CEO Dr Jill Tolfrey told *The Guardian*.

She says demand has crept up since the charity began offering mental health services in 2012 and its helpline saw an influx of calls after the Grenfell Tower fire that had triggered traumatic memories for fire staff – current and retired – throughout the UK.

LEGAL BEAGLE

FEEDING FAT CATS

The government recently introduced a Civil Liability Bill that will deny access to justice to the hundreds of thousands of people injured at work or on the roads each year.

Currently, anyone who is injured in a workplace accident or on the road can claim back the cost of legal advice on a possible claim if their injuries are worth more than £1,000.

Very few claims are below the £1,000 “small claims limit”, which means that only a few people have to take on insurers on their own or pay a lawyer from money that is meant to be compensation for injuries and losses.

On the face of it, the Bill is about whiplash claims. But the government is going to use hidden powers to increase the small claims limit from £1,000 to £5,000 for all road traffic accident cases and from £1,000 to £2,000 for all other cases, including accidents at work.

£2,000 is a lot of money, let alone £5,000, yet the government thinks that it is acceptable to leave people who have been injured through no fault of their own to fight well-funded insurers.

ONE MILLION ON THEIR OWN

It is estimated that up to a million people each year would be left on their own and trade union legal services will be undermined if the Bill goes ahead.

The government is intending to turn over a legal principle that has stood for generations – that the

person who caused an injury should pick up the bill for victims to get legal help and proper compensation.

It says the reason is an increase in the number of false injury claims.

The government claims the Bill will enable insurers to cut motor insurance premiums because it will reduce so-called “fraudulent” claims. But there is no independent evidence of a problem of fraud by people injured on the roads.

And there is no suggestion of fraud from people injured at work whose claims have nothing to do with

motor premiums.

The government says too many people are seeking damages for whiplash injuries in road traffic accidents. But whiplash has nothing to do with people injured at work. The government is using a “crisis” ramped up by the insurers to take away rights from everyone.

The government is claiming that there are a “high number of claims” which need to be reduced, yet claims costs have fallen by 42% in the last six years.

The government claims that the Bill will save money for consumers. But while

insurers saved an astonishing £11 billion in the last six years, premiums are higher than ever.

The government has kept quiet about its admission in the impact assessment for the Bill that the changes will take £6m a year from the NHS and £140m a year from the taxpayer – while providing an extra £1.3 billion profit a year to insurers.

The government claims that there would be annual savings for motorists. At first, it said these would be £50, but in the latest Queen’s Speech they were “about £35”. The truth is that insurers cannot be trusted to pass on savings to motorists. They have broken previous similar promises to reduce premiums in the past. The government has already said that it will not force insurers to reduce premiums.

ATTACK ON ACCESS TO JUSTICE

The government’s cry of “compensation culture” is a fig leaf to distract people from its true intention: to attack access to justice for all injured people, including workers, and to pass billions to its rich friends in the insurance industry.

The House of Commons Justice Committee recently released a report that was highly critical of government proposals.

With your help, we can put the brakes on this insurer-backed Bill – you can use a draft letter at www.feedingfatcats.co.uk to write to your MP.

■ Follow @FeedingFatCats on Twitter and support the campaign.



SATOSHI KAMAYASHI



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

WWW.THOMPSONSTRADOUNION.LAW/TRADE-UNIONS/FBU

CLIPPER ROUND THE WORLD RACE



When Nottinghamshire firefighter Bex Sims got the call last year to say she had been selected for the firefighter place on leg six of the Clipper 2017-18 round the world yacht race, she was speechless – which doesn't happen often, she says.

Official race timekeeper Elliot Brown Watches had offered, through *Firefighter (right)*, the opportunity to take part in the Qingdao to Seattle leg of the race.

This is Bex Sims' account of her experience:

“I'd heard all sorts of tales from friends, skippers and blogs from previous races, which meant that I was prepared for the worst, and hoping for the best.

Departure day came and, after an amazing celebration and great send off from the new Chinese yacht club in Qingdao, we spent the first week getting used to our new environment and learning the actual ropes. The wind was surprisingly light and the temperature unexpectedly warm.

My team – Visit Seattle – had a great start and were leading the pack of 11 which was brilliant for our team spirit.

WAVES 14 METRES HIGH

We ended up in a huge storm on day 20-21, our top wind gust reached 110 knots! The sea state at that time was “phenomenal” – not only an awe-inspiring proclamation, but an actual sea state description, and the top one for the records – waves over 14 metres high. After surviving these conditions I remembered that the biggest ladder on my truck was 13.5 metres – reaching the fourth floor.

Retrospectively, I actually enjoyed that storm, but the being on deck bit seeing amazing mountainous seas, not on “mother duty” below decks attempting to make food for 19 hungry mouths, especially when an unseen rogue wave threw most of lunch all over me.



I'VE NEVER BEEN MORE TIRED IN MY LIFE

Nottinghamshire firefighter Bex Sims sailed nearly 6,000 nautical miles across the Pacific, encountering waves four storeys high



The arrival in Seattle, my team's home port, was fantastic. After an unexpectedly long 31 days at sea it was great to see land, and loved ones, and celebrate what we had achieved.

We had sailed 5,910 nautical miles since Qingdao and had some unforgettable experiences which for me were definitely once in a lifetime.

It is the hardest thing I've ever done, and I've never been more tired in my life – hard physical sail changes in the middle of the night on very little sleep, being battered with cold, salty relentless waves when every foot and hand hold moves unpredictably every few seconds, is difficult.

FRIENDS FOR LIFE

But I wouldn't have it any other way – I feel a huge sense of achievement and when I look at a globe and see the distance we travelled – a third of the way around the world – with an amazing team, now friends for life, I still can't quite believe it.

A huge thanks to Clipper and Elliot Brown for this unique and challenging experience, one I will never forget.

■ www.clipperroundtheworld.com/news/article/a-firefighters-countdown-to-seattle

■ www.fbu.org.uk/watches

ROWING FOR RESEARCH

In June this year, four British men were planning to row their way into the record books by becoming the fastest four-man crew to row the Indian Ocean. Their route was due to take them 3,600 nautical miles from Exmouth in Western Australia to Port Louis, Mauritius, in a 29-foot-long ocean rowing boat.

For between 60 and 75 days they will row in two-hour, two-man shifts. If anything breaks or if they have any medical issues, they will have to deal with it themselves with the equipment that they have to hand. Their motivation when times get tough will be the knowledge that they are doing something to help others. Well, that and the fact that there is no way to actually get off the boat!

One of the crew is Billy Taylor, a firefighter with the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service who, in 2014, took part in the inaugural Great Pacific Race and with three others managed to take second place, after spending more than 45 days at sea.

The four men who make up the Indian Ocean 2018 crew are not just taking on the row to challenge themselves. One of the crew, Robin Buttery, was diagnosed with young onset Parkinson's disease three years ago.

He and Billy have been working together with Professor Helen Dawes at Oxford Brookes University to collect research data to learn about how such an extended time of endurance exercise affects somebody with Parkinson's disease.

The CLEAR (clinical, exercise and rehabilitation) unit at Brookes is dedicated to helping those with neurological conditions such as Parkinson's and offers rehabilitation programs to help manage their symptoms.

It is known that exercise is probably the best way to do this, but what is not known is how much exercise is best to achieve the most positive results. By using video analysis of the two men alongside blood tests and nutritional intake diaries, it is hoped that Brookes will be able to fine-tune its rehabilitation programmes so that people with Parkinson's receive the most benefit possible.

This is ground breaking research that has already shown promising results from Robin's intensive training program. It also gives Robin an opportunity to show others who have the condition that a life of fun and adventure does not have to come to an end with a diagnosis.

■ We wish Billy and the Indian Ocean Row Crew the best of luck with their incredible challenge. To follow their adventure go to www.rowtheindianocean.com

Research in the USA has shown that firefighters are nearly 10 times more likely to be diagnosed with Parkinson's than average





FBU WEAR

TWO NEW RANGES
NOW AVAILABLE FROM
OUR ONLINE SHOP

SHOP.FBU.ORG.UK



STATION CAT A BRITISH EXPORT THAT MAY NOT BE WELCOMED

IN A LAND DOWN UNDER

Since his appointment in 2011, Merseyside's chief fire officer Dan Stephens has dealt with severe cuts in the central government grant for Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service. He has "saved" £26 million by cutting nearly 300 firefighter jobs and reducing the number of fire engines from 42 to 28.

By 2019-20 further cuts to the revenue support grant for Merseyside will require a further £11 million reduction in spending, which could mean the loss of another 100 firefighter posts, along with 10 fire engines and four stations.

Mr Stephens has recently become an opponent of the government's cuts to engines and stations. He is on record as saying that Merseyside is "inadequately" covered.

Hardly surprising, then, that Mr Stephens has resigned and is off to pastures new. He has accepted the job of chief executive officer of the Melbourne Metropolitan Fire Brigade (MFB) in Victoria, Australia.

Your Cat has been in touch with her Antipodean acquaintances and they tell me that the grass may not be as green in Australia as Mr Stephens might hope.

The United Firefighters Union of Australia (UFUA), a political thorn in the side of the Australian government, has already sounded an ominous warning.

Within hours of the news of Mr Stephens' appointment, the union's combative national secretary



Peter Marshall, national secretary of the UFUA, at the FBU conference

Peter Marshall was on the attack, saying Mr Stephens had presided over savage cuts to firefighter numbers in Merseyside.

The union's leader says the man chosen for the MFB's top job, has a "union-busting, budget-breaking" track record.

Mr Marshall wrote in a bulletin to his members that "the UFUA has serious concerns about the appropriateness of the appointment as we do not want to import the British fire services culture of forfeiting safe working conditions and firefighter positions for pecuniary purposes".

BAY WATCH IN WEST SUSSEX

When the crew of the fire appliance returned to their vehicle after a session in the gym they must have been well impressed. A passer-by had chosen to compliment the driver and leave a yellow note on the windscreen reading "Parking Fine".

As your Cat is all too aware, things aren't always as they seem.

West Sussex Fire

and Rescue Service confirmed that the fire engine from East Grinstead was parked in a bay designated for police vehicles only. At the time the crew were using fitness facilities in the Atrium Centre as theirs was undergoing maintenance.

A Mid-Sussex district council official confirmed that "one of our civil enforcement officers was patrolling the area and identified that a fire engine was parked in a bay designated for police vehicles only".

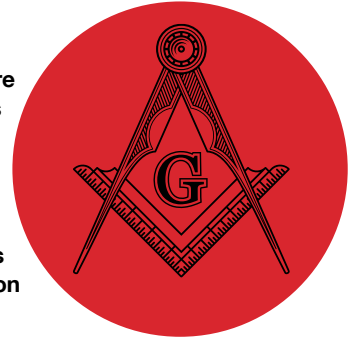
He went on: "It has come to our notice that the fire crew were on official duty, with the police aware of their use of the bay. We have notified the fire service that the ticket will be withdrawn."

So, no waste of time or effort there then, just inappropriate use of common sense.

In other news, firefighters rushing to the scene of a blaze in Bristol had to abandon their fire engine in the street – because parked cars made the road too narrow for it to pass through.

If only there was an ambitious, target-chasing, civil enforcement officer in East Grinstead looking for a transfer to the West Country ...

The square
and compass
– symbol of
freemasonry
– will adorn
two high-rise
appliances
in London



SMOKE AND MIRRORS?

London Fire Brigade has received quite a lot of criticism for accepting a donation of £2.5m from the Freemasons for the purchase of two high-rise appliances.

Much of the criticism seems to be centred on the request from the Freemasons to have their emblem, the square and compass, on these fire engines. A sort of corporate advertising, if you will. At £1.25m per fire engine it certainly isn't cheap.

Private money into the public sector, secret societies, the tip of the iceberg – the mainstream press had a field day. To be fair, your Cat took a similar view.

Then your Cat got thinking.

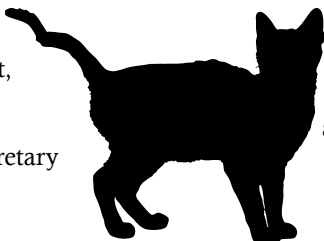
So just how did this window of opportunity present itself?

LFB certainly didn't have the high-rise capability that the risk within the capital demands. Even your rural based country bumpkin cat knows that there is a scarcity of bungalows in central London.

The press also failed to investigate the years of austerity and cuts to fire service budgets and how much impact this has had on LFB's front-line capability.

It is the role of central government to ensure a properly funded emergency service to the public in the UK, not some private organisation.

Your cat cannot help but think is this a serious case of smoke and *Mirrors* and *Telegraphs* and BBCs?



25-YEAR BADGES



Kev Robbins (r), training school, Oxfordshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Jimmy Harris



John Scott (r), RDS, Galashiels, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from Mid/East Lothian and Scottish Borders lead official Gus Sproul



Daniel Getty (r), Ballymoney, Northern Ireland, receives his 25-year badge from regional secretary Stephen Boyd



Stephen Henry (r), Ballymoney, Northern Ireland, receives his 25-year badge from regional secretary Stephen Boyd



Stephen Tucker (r), RDS, Glastonbury, Devon & Somerset FRS, receives his 25-year badge from FBU rep Dave Lock with the Glastonbury crew looking on



James Timothy (l), blue watch, Harrow, London, receives his 25-year badge from regional secretary David Shek with colleagues looking on



Mike Carruthers (r), green watch, Sale, Greater Manchester, receives his 25-year badge from D Division rep Mike Alston with colleagues looking on



James Anderson (l), blue watch, Easterhouse, Glasgow, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Thomas Hanlon



John Garvey (l), Newtown-hamilton, Northern Ireland, receives his 25-year badge from regional secretary Stephen Boyd



Graham Moore (r), Newry, Northern Ireland, receives his 25-year badge from regional secretary Stephen Boyd



Mike Evans (l), blue watch, Pontypridd, South Wales, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Andy James



Andy Gray (l), blue watch, Camberley, Surrey, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Lee Belsten alongside watch members



Kenny Stewart (r), white watch, Clydesmill, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Mark Tracey with colleagues looking on



Ian Crabb (r), RDS, Poole, Dorset and Wiltshire, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Rich Cole, with retained members looking on



Garry Trotter (l), Bo'ness, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from Falkirk and West Lothian lead official Craig Lauder



Owen Cameron (r), Glenrothes, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from branch chair Gordon Stewart



Richard McKenna (l), Bo'ness, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from Falkirk and West Lothian lead official Craig Lauder



Paul Smith (l), white watch, Morriston, Swansea, Mid and West Wales, receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair Andrew Hearne



Thomas Bradley (r), Ballymoney, Northern Ireland, receives his 25-year badge from regional secretary Stephen Boyd



Mark Samuel (l), South Wales officers branch, receives his 25-year badge from officers' rep Ian Buckley



Gary Collins (r), Peterhead, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Darren Watson



Robbie Sturrock (l), Peterhead, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Darren Watson



Brian Ferguson (l), black watch, Dogsthorpe, Cambridgeshire, receives his 25-year badge from branch chair Phil Gould with colleagues looking on



Nick Edwards (r), RDS, Glastonbury, Devon & Somerset, receives his 25-year badge from FBU rep Dave Lock with the Glastonbury crew looking on



Graeme Flanagan (r), white watch, Clydesmill, Cambuslang, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Mark Tracey, with colleagues looking on



Darren North (r), Hay Mills, Birmingham, West Midlands, receives his 25-year badge from Leon Johnson



Billy MacKenzie (l), training, Bo'ness, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from Falkirk and West Lothian lead official Craig Lauder



Charlie Gallacher (l), Glenrothes, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from Fife lead official Allan Still



David Kenny (l), Bo'ness, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from Falkirk and West Lothian lead official Craig Lauder



Kev Burns (l), Tyne and Wear, receives his 25-year badge from Ronnie Monaghan with colleagues looking on



Kirt Livesey (r), Chorley USAR, Lancashire, receives his 25-year badge from Phil Whittaker with colleagues looking on



Mike Hopley (r), Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, receives his 25-year badge from branch official Stevie Rae with colleagues looking on



Christopher Simpson (l), red watch, Camberley, Surrey, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Lee Belsten alongside watch members



Richard Hannah (r), Bo'ness, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from East area secretary John McKenzie



Rob Tayler (l), blue watch, Camberley, Surrey, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Lee Belsten alongside watch members

25-YEAR BADGES



Rob Morley (r), Bloxwich, West Midlands, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Andrew Nightingale



Adrian Jenkins (l), Morriston, Swansea, Mid and West Wales, receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair Andrew Hearne



Rick McGowan (r), Haden Cross, Cradley Heath, West Midlands, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Dan Ingley



Alec Hume (r), Operations, Edinburgh, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from East area chair Ian McGregor



Tim Davies (l), South Wales officers' branch, receives his 25-year badge from officers' rep Ian Buckley



Neil Riley (l), white watch, Pontypridd, South Wales, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Andy James with (l-r) Owen Williams, Dominic Barnes, James Connor, Andy James, Neil Riley, Eleanor Hathaway and Anthony Green.



Fraser Simpson (r), Scotland operational assurance, receives his 25-year badge from H&S official Dave Hart



David Cole (l), green watch, Camberley, Surrey, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Lee Belsten alongside watch members



Roy Purvis (r), WW, Lisburn, receives his 25-year badge from branch chair Andy Beavis with station colleagues looking on



Marcus Lewis (r), red watch, Wokingham, Berkshire, receives his 25-year badge from FBU organiser James Hunt



Martin Heatley (l), RW, regional control centre, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Mark McCartan



Jim Burgess (r), white watch, Swindon, Devon & Wiltshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Andy Thompson with colleagues (l-r) Miles Wilson-Morris, Mike Wainwright, Paul Hanlon, (Andy Thompson and Jim Burgess), Chris Pye and Gav Watson



Clive Hamilton (l), RW, regional control centre, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Dermot McPoland



Nicholas Thompson (l), learning and development centre Northern Ireland, receives his 25-year badge from branch chair Ray O'Hare with new recruits looking on



Shawn Howlett (l), white watch, Soho, London, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Darren Cameron with colleagues looking on



Receiving their 25-year badges from officer's national secretary Simon Amos (back row, fourth right): (Back row l-r) London officers' chair **Greg Ashman**, **Jon Curtis**, **Sean Judge** and (front row l-r) training school instructor **Malcolm Stanton MBE**, **Lee Willis**, **Laurence Fairbanks** and **Keith Rand**



Leon Murray (l), Scottish North area organiser, receives his 25-year badge from regional secretary **Denise Christie**



Lee Glover (r), red watch, Dee Road, Reading, Berkshire, receives his 25-year badge from **Steve Collins** with red watch colleagues looking on



Clive Johnson (l), and **Robin Cousins** (r), Staveley, Cumbria, receive their 25-year badges from women's rep **Sue de Lima**



Philip Martin (r), Northern Ireland headquarters, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser **Dermot McPoland**



Joe Leaver (r), red watch, Wokingham, Berkshire, receives his 25-year badge from FBU organiser **James Hunt**



John McLaughlin (r), Ballymoney, Northern Ireland, receives his 25-year badge from regional secretary **Stephen Boyd**

Please send good quality, 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
07889 056916, karl.mckee@fbu.org.uk

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

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
01273 309762, 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.

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