

FireFighter

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

November/December 2013

A magnificent show of solidarity

PENSIONS: LATEST NEWS

See pages 2, 4, 14 and 15



**WE RESCUE
PEOPLE,
NOT BANKS!**

STOP THE CUTS





Matt Wrack

A magnificent response from all members

We have seen a number of important developments in the last month which are very encouraging as the FBU goes forward to meet the challenges facing us.

There was a magnificent turn out for our demonstration and rally on Wednesday 16 October in London. Trains and coaches packed with members came from around the country. There was a good blend of older hands and younger faces, making for a loud and vibrant demonstration.

Around half of all firefighters available – those not on shift, about to go on shift or coming off night shift – attended the event.

London members disregarded the disgraceful threats made by their chief officer and turned up proudly wearing fire kit. Beneath a sea of FBU banners, our members marched wearing FBU caps and many sporting FBU t-shirts, declaring “We rescue people, not banks”.

March

We marched through torrential rain, right into the centre of London, past Theatreland, through Trafalgar Square and into the heart of the Westminster government. Some members made their opinions very clear at Downing Street, telling the prime minister what we think of his competence. Chants of “You don’t know what you’re doing” echoed the length of Whitehall.

We received strong support

from MPs. Ian Lavery, Chris Williamson, Katy Clark and John McDonnell spoke at the event and other MPs attended. We also had support from NUT general secretary Christine Blower and from David Bueno, representing Spanish firefighters within the CC.OO union.

I want to thank all those who attended on the day and all those who helped organise it. We made our presence felt. We showed again that the FBU is a strong, collective force able to mobilise and defend ourselves robustly. We will need this strength in the period ahead.

Pensions

There have been significant developments with the UK-wide employers and the Westminster government around the issue of “no job, no pension” in recent weeks. This issue has been central to discussions on firefighter pensions since before the introduction of the 2006 New Firefighters’ Pension Scheme.

The FBU has always argued that firefighters would be unable to maintain operational levels of fitness into their late 50s and beyond.

Large numbers would be left facing the risk of “no job, no pension”, as employers would be unable to pay a pension and firefighters unable to

continue in operational roles. This argument has been central to our campaign to defend pension rights.

It is important to note the significance of recent developments:

- Employers have now confirmed that the risk exists of capability dismissals (of “no job, no pension”) in their letter of 17 October.
- They have done so clearly in a tripartite meeting with government officials present.
- They have presented a set of principles which supposedly address this risk.
- At subsequent meetings,

the employers confirmed very clearly that they would not provide any sort of guarantee to protect the position of firefighters.

FBU members will note that this threat of “no job, no pension” had previously been dismissed at a national and local level by government as well as by individual chief officers, fire authorities and others, not least when strike action has been threatened.

We have clearly demonstrated, yet again, that the FBU has been correct to highlight this point throughout.

Yet government and employers refuse to fix the problem they have created.

That is why we had to name further strike dates.

Still campaigning

Pensions rightly take up a great deal of effort and energy at present. But the union is not forgetting other issues we face.

The cuts – and our campaign against them – continue. More fire station closures and the loss of more firefighter posts are being mooted across the UK. Even Blaina fire station in South Wales, where we lost two members at a house fire in 1996, is now threatened.

We cannot allow any cut to go unanswered. We need to raise our voices everywhere and explain patiently why cuts are bad for the public, for the service and for firefighters.

We will also continue to take up issues on behalf of all our members. We know our retained members face huge problems with pumps off the run, lack of training and problems with recruitment.

The FBU is the only organisation that unites all firefighters and wants to level up all conditions to benefit all firefighters.

The events of the last month have underlined the irreplaceable role the FBU plays for all firefighters and for the fire and rescue service. We face the obstacles in our path united and resolute to defend our essential humanitarian service.

As we made clear on our march, using the slogan coined by Spanish firefighters: **We rescue people, not banks.**



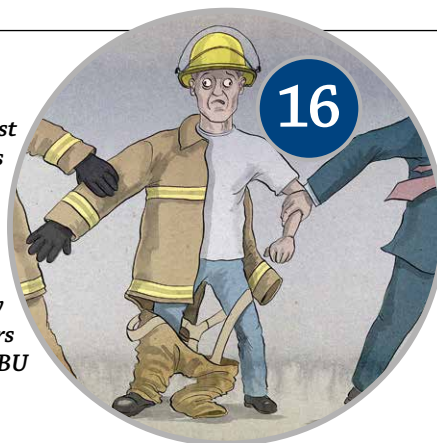
Follow the general secretary on Twitter: @MattWrack



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Employers must tackle the issues facing retained duty system firefighters – including being pulled in different directions by different employers – says the FBU



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LETTER

Public must be alerted to threat to fire service

May I draw your attention to two fires in the London Borough of Bromley in September?

An Orpington fish and chip shop was ravaged by a fire. Half of Seabream Fish Bar in Warren Road was left severely damaged after a blaze on the night of Saturday 21.

An elderly woman suffered smoke inhalation and a panic attack, and was treated at the scene by ambulance crews. Four fire engines from Addington, Surbiton, Richmond, and Kingston stations went to the scene with 21 firefighters and officers. The brigade was called at 7.40pm and the fire was brought under control by 8.25pm. The cause of the fire is being investigated.

A fire that destroyed the loft of a house in Ridley Road, Bromley was caused by an electrical fault. Firefighters called at around 3am on 25 September found the converted loft space in the house alight.

A man and woman, who left the building before the brigade arrived, were treated at the scene for smoke inhalation by London ambulance crews. The man was also treated for very minor burns to his hand. The fire was under control by just after 4am.

Four fire engines from Bromley, Downham, Beckenham and Southwark fire stations went to the scene with 21 firefighters and officers.

The general public's notice must be drawn to these facts. The fire and rescue service is going to the dogs like the rest of the country and it is up to you to stop it.

Raymond Worboys

Editor's note: Downham and Southwark fire stations remain under threat of closure under London mayor Boris Johnson's plans to close 10 London fire stations next year.



FBU demonstrators had a clear message for Westminster fire minister Brandon Lewis on the 16 October march

Broken promises force union to call more strikes

Pensions

As *Firefighter* went to press, the FBU's executive council announced new dates for strike action after a rash of broken promises by employers and the Westminster government.

The union announced strikes on 1 and 4 November after government and employers failed to offer any firm guarantees for firefighters facing "no job and no pension" as a result of pension changes.

The FBU had postponed a five-hour strike on Saturday 19 October after the Westminster government and fire employers shifted their position and finally recognised that firefighters face losing their jobs and a large chunk of their pensions under changes imposed in April.

Government and employers offered various routes to tackle the problem of firefighters not fit enough to work beyond the current retirement age of 55 in a letter on

17 October (see page 15).

But the following week they informed the FBU they could provide none of the guarantees necessary to address this crucial aspect of the dispute.

FBU general secretary Matt Wrack said: "The FBU has been very reasonable, but we are now faced with broken promises and those in power evading their responsibilities.

"The Westminster government has created this mess, but it is refusing to clear it up. It now recognises the problem, but it won't provide the legal and financial guarantees firefighters need to ensure they have a job and an unreduced pension in the future.

"Firefighters face the sack towards the end of their career and the loss of their pension. That can't be right.

"The employers promised to tackle the issue of firefighters facing the sack for failing fitness tests last week, only to say they can't offer any guarantees this

week. That is simply not the way to run a public service.

"The government is now making threats to withdraw some of the other concessions they have made this year. Their own Williams report shows most firefighters cannot work beyond 55. They are trying to bludgeon firefighters into an unworkable pension scheme.

"We are not prepared to be bullied.

"Firefighters don't want to go on strike, but we are left with no option when the government and the employers refuse to deal with the problems of their own making.

In addition, the government is proposing further increases in employee contributions from April 2014.

This would mean a third year of contribution increases and would see the majority of firefighters paying around 14.2% of salary towards their pensions – among the highest contributions in the public and private sectors.

Honda workers on strike in Zhongshan, Guangdong province in June 2010

TYRONE SIU/REUTERS



www.fbu.org.uk

FBU takes pensions message to N Ireland

Pensions

FBU officials gave evidence on fire-fighters' pensions to the Northern Ireland Assembly's finance and personnel committee (*below*) in October.

General secretary Matt Wrack, national officer Sean Starbuck, vice-president Jim Barbour and Northern Ireland regional secretary Jim Quinn attended the hearing in Belfast.

Wrack said: "We have had this debate for the past two and a half years in different parts of the UK with Westminster, the Scottish Government and the Welsh

Assembly Government, and we hope that the discussion with yourselves can avoid some of the difficulties we have encountered.

"As you'd expect from a trade union, we have a number of principled views on changes to pensions but we're not here to talk about that. We're here to talk very much about evidence.

"We have we believe a strong case about the specifics of the firefighters' pension schemes and the proposals for the new scheme, and our case is essentially around the argument that if it's an occupational scheme it must be based around the occupation."



Marlie Farm: Time to give families peace says FBU

Safety

The FBU has criticised East Sussex fire and rescue service for its decision to go to court yet again in a bid to avoid liability for the deaths of two firefighters at Marlie Farm in 2006. The latest application is to the Court of Appeal.

FBU general secretary Matt Wrack said: "It's time for East Sussex fire and rescue service to give the families of the firefighters

killed the peace and justice they have awaited for seven years.

"The fire and rescue service should abandon its appeal and pay the appropriate compensation immediately.

"It's a relief, but no surprise, that the courts have dismissed their meritless appeal on every ground of application. It is shocking that they will now prolong the families' agony by appealing again.

"We should never forget that two lives were needlessly lost at Marlie Farm as a result of a systemic and cultural failure of those responsible for East Sussex fire and rescue service.

"The FBU has been proud to support this case on behalf of firefighters throughout this long process and will continue to fight alongside them as long as it takes to achieve justice."

SOUNDING OFF

Chinese workers: fighters, not victims

Han Dongfang, director of the *China Labour Bulletin*, discussed workers' rights in China at a Warwick University meeting in September

On 31 May 2010 hundreds of workers went on strike at a Honda car parts factory in Guangdong in southern China. Determined and united, they won a 35% pay increase.

The strike set a new benchmark for labour activism in China. It forced employers, local governments and, crucially, the official trade union (ACFTU – the All-China Federation of Trade Unions), to take workers' grievances seriously.

Following this success, a wave of strikes spread in the car and other industries across China. The strikes are still going on.

In February this year, 200 workers, the entire workforce at the American-owned International Paper factory in Guangzhou went on strike, against a management decision to cut bonuses.

In another case that erupted in May this year, more than 100 healthcare workers and security guards at a Guangzhou hospital staged a protest on the steps outside the hospital entrance.

Many strikes and protests are getting greater public attention because workers are now adept at using social media.

China's workers should not be seen as victims of repression and exploitation. All the evidence shows that more and more have been transformed into workplace activists.

They are not only fighting back instinctively, they are now more organised and in the future will be more strategic in their approach. They are no longer satisfied with just fighting for a one-off deal, but are starting to fight for a long-term solution.

And that solution is an effective trade union. The rise of China's trade union movement will have a profound impact on the re-emergence of the international labour movement.

More: www.clb.org.hk/en/

School looks at effect of fire cuts on minority communities

The seventeenth FBU national black and ethnic minority members' (B&EMM) school took place on 11–13 October in Birmingham

There were 37 B&EMM students and a variety of guests throughout the weekend. The theme of the school was the current fire and rescue service industrial issues and their direct impact on black and minority ethnic communities.

FBU president Alan McLean opened the school and participants heard from general secretary Matt Wrack and national officer Sean Starbuck on the pensions dispute.

The school included a film showing of the Liverpool Slave Trail tour, detailing the historical and economic contribution that slavery made to the early foundations of that great city. The

founder and tour guide, Eric Lynch, then detailed his own personal history and the reasons behind the tour.

The school included a discussion on the role of B&EMM and wider union structures. National officer John McGhee encouraged students to get involved and to improve the diversity of FBU officials.

The downgrading of equality in the fire and rescue service and the lack of recruitment opportunities were also debated.

Students also detailed what they felt should be the future strategy for B&EMM and the FBU on key issues.

Bros Dave Pamah, Pierre Marsh, Lud Ramsey and Mark Brown were presented with gifts to give thanks for their career-long loyalty and outstanding work on B&EMM.

Mick Nicholas, B&EMM national secretary

IN BRIEF

'Lives at risk'

Cuts to Warwickshire fire and rescue service will put lives at risk, FBU officials have warned.

The service faces having to make between £2.3m and £3.5m (12% and 18%) in savings before 2018, which could lead to the loss of over 100 posts, or almost three out of 10 frontline firefighters.

Marcus Giles, FBU brigade secretary for Warwickshire, said: "Job losses mean firefighters will be stretched to new levels, and further station closures will be inevitable."

Devastating cuts

Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service has announced proposals to cut over £5m from its budget – losing 131 firefighter posts (20% of total).

These proposals also include the closure of Gosforth, Wallsend and Sunderland Central fire stations, with plans for a new station and the permanent removal of six frontline fire engines (20% of total engines).

Brigade secretary Dave Turner said: "It means that areas of Tyne and Wear will be left without cover for extended periods, increasing the risk to public and firefighters."

Concern over BA use

East Sussex FBU has expressed grave concern over breathing apparatus training for stand-in staff called to work during strike action.

During the pension strike on 25 September stand-in staff, who included the East Sussex chief fire officer, wore breathing apparatus to tackle a bus fire.

FBU officials had reminded them that firefighters must not wear breathing apparatus at emergency incidents until they have received suitable training and proved competence, otherwise they will be risking their own and the public's safety.

Principal managers told FBU reps the staff, many of whom may not have worn breathing apparatus for many years, had one day's refresher training.



FBU members at the school

FBU opposes cuts to stations and jobs that threaten response times

Derbyshire

FBU officials have "grave concerns" about proposals by Derbyshire fire and rescue service to close fire stations and cut jobs to balance its budget.

Derbyshire is holding a public consultation on its "Fit to Respond to 2022" plans.

Fire stations in New Mills, Whaley Bridge and Chapel-en-le-Frith are earmarked for closure. The plans include axing wholtime day cover at Glossop and replacing it with retained

firefighters.

A new fire station is planned for Furness Vale, which would become the next nearest Derbyshire fire station to Glossop.

Derbyshire FBU brigade secretary Chris Tapp said: "We don't think the reduction in fire cover and increases in response times and everything that goes with them are acceptable for the communities of Derbyshire."

Under the system, retained staff must live within five

minutes of the station.

Estimates given by the fire service suggest that, if given the go-ahead, crews would take on average another four minutes to reach daytime emergencies across Glossop.

The fire service is also considering selling off houses next to the station – so the firefighters currently living in them would have to move.

The fire station could also have one of its two engines replaced with a smaller response vehicle.

**NEWS
FOCUS**
'Blaina fire station has been vital to the history and development of the UK fire and rescue service and we must make sure it stays open'



Blaina fire station campaigners at the civic centre in Ebbw Vale

History and fears for future combine in fight to save Blaina

Local residents and firefighters have reacted angrily to South Wales fire and rescue service plans to close Blaina fire station.

FBU South Wales brigade secretary Mark Watt said: "This closure would slow response times and increase the risk of death, injury and loss of property among the community.

"This is a highly contentious issue, as the closure would leave one of the poorest areas in Europe without a fire station."

Blaina also has history. On 1 February 1996 firefighters Steven Griffin and Kevin Lane were trapped by a delayed backdraught and killed despite desperate attempts by colleagues to rescue them.

Watt added: "It's highly emotive. After the tragedy in 1996 firefighters and local residents pledged to do everything we could to ensure that the memories of those two fallen brothers were not forgotten.

"Blaina fire station has been vital to the history and development of the UK fire and rescue service and we must make sure it stays open."

The Blaina fire was the subject of a detailed FBU investigation and the lessons have been discussed ever since.

First, the emergency response. Some fire and rescue services, including Gwent, routinely sent only one appliance to domestic fires.

The FBU argued that: "An initial mobilisation of two appliances on receipt of

After the tragedy in 1996 firefighters and local residents pledged to do everything we could to ensure that the memories of those two fallen brothers were not forgotten

the first call to the incident would have provided an additional crew at the fire one minute and 37 seconds before the backdraught occurred.

"This additional crew could have begun firefighting/venting duties prior to the re-committal of the Blaina BA crew who were caught in the backdraught. The second appliance could also have provided

a BA emergency team."

The Fire and Emergency Cover (Pathfinder) Review subsequently confirmed the FBU view on the need for a minimum of nine firefighters to carry out operations safely at a scenario like Blaina.

Second, national guidance and procedures for the use of breathing apparatus were not put into practice at the fire in Blaina. Breathing apparatus procedures were revised in *Home Office Technical Bulletin 1/97* in light of these failures.

Finally, the failures were found to have been exacerbated by the lack of training. The FBU recommended that, within five years: "Sufficient practical training facilities must be provided to enable all firefighters to receive basic and continuation training using real fire training techniques and procedures."

In the aftermath of the incident, the Health and Safety Executive served enforcement notices upon Gwent Fire Brigade related to training for operational risks.

Australian firefighters battle early wildfires

Firefighters in Australia faced a state of emergency in October when widespread wildfires came unusually early, devastating homes and communities around Sydney in the state of New South Wales.

Fire crews said the fires were the worst they had seen in 30 years of service. The fires started early in the season and follow Australia's hottest year on record.

Residents in some areas faced mandatory evacuation, as firefighters feared that multiple blazes would converge to form a "mega-blaze", threatening Sydney itself.

Firefighters worked day and night to control the spread of these fires.

The United Firefighters Union of Australia (UFUA) warned in September about the preparedness of fire brigades, including those that rely on volunteer firefighters, to cope during the coming fire season.

Peter Marshall, the union's national secretary, said: "The research shows that there has been a decline in the volunteer firefighter numbers. The brigades that do have volunteers are not

necessarily available during the times they're required, so there are certain problems, but that's like all voluntary organisations."

A recent report on Australia's preparedness to respond to extreme weather events recommended that state governments should address issues of compatibility and the capacity for emergency services, especially fire services, to operate together more effectively.

Marshall said a national approach was urgently needed. "There's no one agency that operates as an overarching umbrella to ensure co-ordination.

"Each state, each territory, does their own thing. Indeed, they do it differently.

"The equipment is not compatible, training levels are different, even protective equipment is different.

"We are long overdue for a national approach, because fires, and indeed other extreme weather events, do not know geographical boundaries."

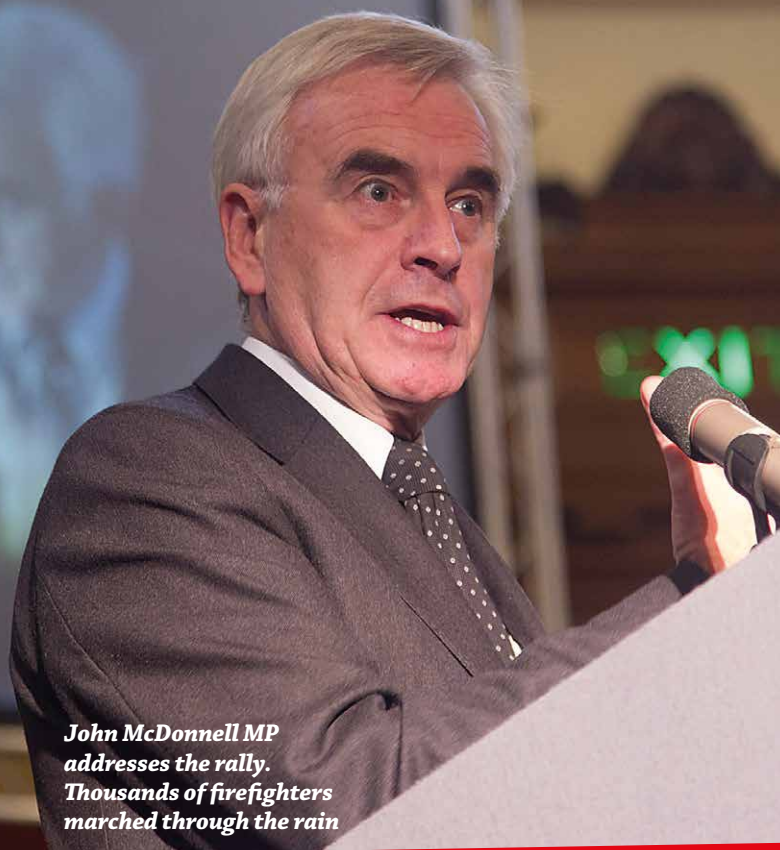
The union has emphasised that lessons have not been learned from previous wildfires.





*Country Fire Authority
firefighters from the state
of Victoria helped New
South Wales Rural Fire
Service firefighters create
containment lines in the Blue
Mountains, west of Sydney*

DAN HIMBRECHTS/AAP/PA IMAGES



John McDonnell MP addresses the rally. Thousands of firefighters marched through the rain



A magnificent s

Helen Hague describes the successful FBU demonstration on 16 October

On a drizzly day in mid-October, firefighters from across the UK marched through central London, banners held high in defence of decent pensions and public safety.

The well-attended march, through the West End, Whitehall and Westminster, proved a timely show of collective strength. It sent a clear message to ministers: firefighters' pensions are not up for grabs and there is no mandate to cut the fire and rescue service.

Inspiration

Amid kazoo and whistle blasts, the march kicked off near Tottenham Court Road, after rallying speeches delivered from a customised FBU fire engine.

There was a strong turnout from Norfolk, with over 100 firefighters joining the march – including “the anonymous firefighter” in full

fire-retardant kit, including helmet, breathing apparatus and oxygen bottle. He was pushing a customised Zimmer frame, complete with “OLD GIT2” number plate.

He can be spotted around stations and shopping centres in East Anglia, pointing up the folly of insisting firefighters can work on the frontline until they are 60. This ad hoc street theatre certainly gets the message across – chiming with t-shirts other marchers were wearing, featuring elderly firefighters bowed down with age and rescue equipment.

The FBU's national women's committee, banner aloft, was out in force, making a show of strength. Pete Wilcox, FBU regional secretary for the North East, said: “The turnout shows the anger and determination of firefighters facing attacks on terms and conditions and cuts to the service the public rely on. It's got to stop.”

Marchers won praise from union



how of solidarity

leaders and Labour politicians at the post-march rally in Central Hall Westminster. Mohammad Taj, this year's TUC president, brought fraternal greetings and offered firefighters "100% support of the trade union movement".

"Cuts cost lives," he said. "The people of Britain want a fire service, not a funeral service."

Work longer for less

Christine Blower, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said firefighters and teachers both do vital jobs – and both were being asked to work longer for less reward.

John McDonnell MP, who leads the firefighters' parliamentary group, said the turnout on the march was tremendous, and

praised firefighters for standing up for their pensions. Katy Clark MP said the public wants local fire stations crewed by physically fit staff.

David Bueno, whose CC.OO union represents firefighters in Spain, told how his members were resisting pressure to help the authorities evict tenants. Their stance prompted the slogan: "We rescue people, not banks". A good few marchers in

London were wearing t-shirts with this solidarity message.

FBU general secretary Matt Wrack said it was an "absolute inspiration" to see so many members from all over the UK had turned out to march in "torrential drizzle" to "defend our conditions of service and our pensions".

Organisation crucial

Workplace organisation was crucial "on every watch, in every workplace," he said. The union faced "horrendous battles ahead", fighting for the fire and rescue service. Firefighters from all corners of the union could make "the professional case" for the service to communities and politicians.



PICTURES:
MARK THOMAS

We rescue people, not banks

What has politics ever done for me?

Dave Green, FBU national political officer, explains why politics matters to everything the FBU does

To many people, politics is a dirty word. Mention politics and you are likely to picture some tubby Member of Parliament fixing expenses and charging household renovations to the taxpayer, or some slippery PR man spinning lies to old school chums at the tabloids over port in some opulent dining room.

However sullied the word is by the Westminster stereotypes, it's undeniable that without politics ordinary people would be a lot worse off. It's through politics that those of us who had been considered too low-born won the vote in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

It's through politics that we built a health service that was free for everyone to use. And it's through

politics that we created trade unions, including the FBU, enabling ordinary people to stand up for themselves – and fight for what's right.

It's a very different kind of politics from the sort that gave us expense scandals and cash-for-honours. But politics is at the very heart of everything the FBU does – and has been right from the word go.

Take a look at your rule book, and you will see that we are told that in order to “improve the position and status” of members and the fire and rescue service, the FBU should “liaise and engage” with all levels of government, “aid and join” with other trade unions or societies with similar aims and “further our political objectives”.

Real issues

The question of politics is a no-brainer. A trade union can't really function without a political fund. If you think back to any major campaign we have fought – and any major victory we have won – it has all been possible because of our political fund.

This union has always been about standing up for what's right and, so long as members vote for a political fund, we are not going to stop any time soon

And, in the current climate, the fund is as important as ever. Firefighters are currently trying to fight off two of the most significant challenges we have ever faced. We are trying to prevent the government introducing a ludicrous pensions system that would make firefighters work longer, pay more and receive less.

On top of this, across the country the service is experiencing the worst cuts in its history, with lives being put at risk in the name of so-called savings. We need the political fund as much as we ever have done to stand up for firefighters and the communities we serve.

We are also fighting against efforts to privatise the fire and rescue service, which will start a race to the bottom with our pay and conditions. The political fund means we can engage politicians on their own territory, at Westminster, the devolved governments or in local councils. The political fund has also paid for campaigning locally, such as the FBU's campaign against mutualisation in Cleveland.

Campaigns over integrated risk management plans, the battle for members working the retained duty system and the fight against regional controls were all possible because of the political fund. To win these kinds of fights, we need money to produce leaflets, posters and petitions, to fund lobbies of local councils, devolved governments, Brussels and Westminster, to finance online campaign activity, to produce reports that set out our arguments and to transport members to demonstrations.

The fund helps us organise a parliamentary group

of sympathetic MPs who can argue our case in the corridors of power, helping to make sure we have an impact on government policy.

Beyond immediate occupational issues, the political fund enables us to undertake wider work – for example on public ownership of the banks. And we are able to continue the FBU's proud history of internationalism as a direct result of funding from the political fund.

Spring ballot

As you might expect, the government is not too keen on us campaigning uninhibited by legislation.

Under the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992, trade unions cannot spend money on political objectives unless they have a political fund that has been approved by a ballot of their members.

To meet this rule, the FBU and other unions have to hold a vote every 10 years, asking members whether our political fund can continue. The last FBU vote was a decade ago, so in spring 2014 we have to vote again.

In spring next year, you will receive a ballot paper for your vote on whether we should continue to run a political fund.

We will cover the political fund more in future issues of *Firefighter*. But, in the meantime, imagine a union that cannot stand up for its members, defend the fire and rescue service from cuts, campaign on equality or fight for better employment rights. The government would love that!

But this union has always been about standing up for what's right and, so long as members vote for a political fund, we are not going to stop any time soon.



The FBU's executive council postponed strike action over pensions in England and Wales that had been scheduled for Saturday 19 October after receiving a letter from employers on 17 October indicating a shift in their position.

The letter is important because it is the first time the employers have recognised in detail the "no job, no pension" issue raised by the FBU.

It includes an additional point suggested by Westminster fire minister Brandon Lewis for a periodic review of fitness standards, training and testing – indicating government recognition of the problem as well.

At first glance the letter appears similar to the Scottish government's position.

However, there are some very significant and important differences. This new letter does not include wider issues, such as protection, that are in the Scottish position.

Neither of these developments deal with other aspects of the FBU trade dispute, such as employee contributions.

Therefore the proposals set out by the national employers in the letter dated 17 October have not been agreed, endorsed or recommended by the FBU's executive council.

FBU officials met with representatives of the employers on Monday 21 October to identify precisely what was meant by their letter and proposals.

At this meeting, the employers' representatives confirmed very clearly that they were not willing to provide any guarantee that firefighters will not face capability dismissals in the circumstances the union has highlighted (age-related decline in fitness).

They argued that they are unable to provide any such guarantee because of the way current pension regulations are drafted.

They agreed that a different regulation on this point would allow the approach sought by the union.

That would require government to address the issue in the scheme regulations.

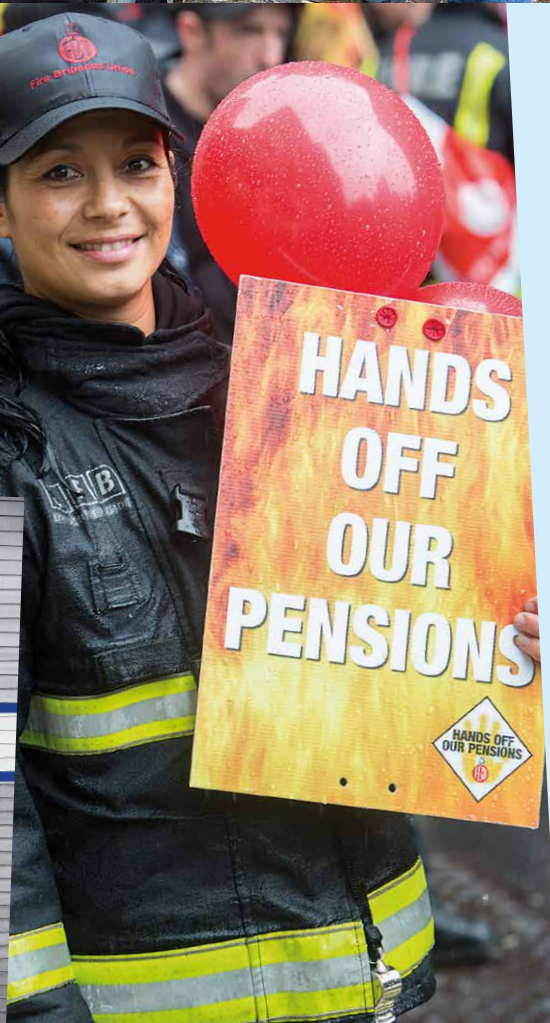
PICTURES: MARK THOMAS



BROKEN PROMISES

Ministers and employers promised changes but then refused to give guarantees





Extract from letter from Maurice Heaster, chair of the national employers

The principles that we would propose are as follows:

1. Firefighting is a physically demanding occupation and it is essential that firefighters have sufficient levels of fitness to enable them to carry out their tasks as safely and effectively as possible. As such, this requires higher levels of fitness than most other occupations and therefore the NJC role maps set out a specific requirement for operational personnel to maintain levels of personal fitness.

2. Fitness standards must reflect the occupational demands of firefighting and all parties have committed to working together through a joint working party on this issue.

3. A process of fitness assessment and development is required in each fire authority to ensure that operational personnel maintain a minimum standard of personal fitness in order to safely perform operational duties.

4. Fitness levels may decline with age and whilst this may be mitigated by fitness training, diet and other lifestyle changes it is acknowledged that there may be a general decline in fitness as a result of the ageing process. All operational personnel will be provided with support to maintain their levels of fitness for the duration of their career.

5. There will be a periodic review under the auspices of the NJC to ensure that appropriate fitness standards, training, testing, monitoring and management policies and procedures are in place in each fire authority working effectively to deliver the principles contained within this document.

6. Fire Authorities do not wish to put operational personnel in a situation where they face "no job, no pension" and no individual will automatically face dismissal if they do not achieve the minimum standard required.

7. Where operational personnel do not achieve the minimum agreed fitness standard consideration will be given to whether an individual is able to continue on full operational duties or should be stood down, taking into account the advice provided by the authority's occupational health provider. In making this decision the safety and well-being of the individual will be the key issue.

8. Fire Authorities commit to providing a minimum of 6 months of development and support to enable individuals who do not achieve the minimum agreed standard to regain the necessary levels of fitness.

9. Where underlying medical reasons are identified that restrict/

prevent someone from achieving the necessary fitness then a referral will be made to occupational health and the individual will again receive the necessary support to facilitate a return to operational duties.

10. Where the medical condition does not allow a return to operational duties, Fire Authorities will fully explore opportunities for reasonable adjustments or redeployment within role. In those circumstances where there are no opportunities for reasonable adjustments or redeployment within role then the fire authority will commence an assessment for ill-health retirement through the IQMP process.

11. If no underlying medical issues are identified and following a programme of development and support it becomes apparent that an individual will be unable to regain the necessary levels of fitness, then a fire authority will fully explore opportunities for reasonable adjustments and/or redeployment within role. In those circumstances where there are no opportunities for reasonable adjustments or redeployment within role, a fire authority will commence the authority initiated early retirement process.

More information:
www.fbu.org.uk

Right people, right skills, right time

The FBU will not accept retained firefighters being treated as second class citizens



The FBU is proud to represent the majority of retained firefighters working in the fire and rescue service. Retained firefighters are hugely important to our union – just as they are to the fire and rescue service itself.

The FBU has a long history of defending the rights of retained firefighters, making sure everyone sufficiently appreciates their importance to the safety of our communities and that the government understands the role the retained play within the fire and rescue service.

As recently as July, after years of campaigning on behalf of retained firefighters over their pensions – including a legal challenge, long negotiations with government and our ballot for strike action – the FBU forced the Department for Communities and Local Government to publish plans for a modified pension scheme for retained firefighters.

Retained matters

The FBU has highlighted a range of issues facing retained firefighters:

- The chronic shortage of retained firefighters
- The number of hours retained firefighters make themselves available in communities
- The lack of investment in retained firefighters' training
- Huge problems with recruitment and retention in many brigades.

The retained duty system has been hit just as hard as wholetime by this government's cuts to our

service. Ken Knight has recently claimed that the fire service has shed few jobs in recent years, yet some 3,600 firefighter jobs across wholetime, retained and control have been cut in the last three years – with more to follow if the government gets its way.

Tam Mitchell, FBU executive council member for retained members, said: "The FBU is clear: we will not accept retained firefighters being treated as second class citizens in the modern fire and rescue service. The FBU has stood by its pledge for equality across the service. When we say 'a firefighter is a firefighter is a firefighter' we don't set one duty system off against another. We all rise and fall together."

Off the run

The FBU is particularly concerned at present by reports of the number of retained pumps off the run. This is not a new issue, but it is one highlighted by anecdotal evidence from FBU officials.

There are particular problems of availability Monday to Friday, when most retained firefighters are engaged in their other employment. Some

Government and advisers like Ken Knight should stop trying to divide and rule



PHIL DISLEY

employers make it hard for retained firefighters to be available during these times. However, the FBU has also found problems at weekends, including in the evening. This is also understandable – it is perfectly reasonable for firefighters to want to spend time with family and friends.

Another problem that has come up frequently of late is retained pumps off the run even when there are sufficient personnel available. These cases include shifts when there is no officer in charge available, where no driver is available and where firefighters have not had BA refresher training.

Firefighters feel frustrated that they cannot serve their communities because cuts across the service have reduced fire cover. Morale is hammered when firefighters are available for work but cannot work (and cannot get paid) because the service is not flexible enough to manage the situation.

All this points to the need for proper investment in the retained service, as part of a properly funded fire and rescue service that resources all duty systems and roles.

Responsibility

It is the responsibility of fire and rescue service employers to tackle these issues. The FBU wants the right people available at the right time and with the right skills. That means a mutually supportive system of wholetime, retained and control firefighters, determined by the risks found in local communities, not on what resources happen to be left in the pot.

Retained firefighters are pulled in different directions by different employers

Another frustration is that many fire and rescue service principal managers do not have the right information to hand to assess these problems – and, even when they do, they do not make use of the data.

For example, targeted recruitment campaigns have been shown to work, but are often not implemented. Similarly, the right training could overcome some problems, if the right resources were in place.

John Arnold, FBU executive council member for officers, has highlighted some solutions used in Northumberland.

He told *Firefighter*: “Northumberland used to have one watch manager and two crew managers on shift at retained stations and had pumps off the run. They decided to increase the number of crew managers to three, so there was an improved number of officers available.

“When services invest like this, we can see the results and we are beginning to see the benefits. It’s a win-win situation for the retained firefighters, for their wholetime colleagues and for the service as a whole.”

The conclusion is simple. The government and its advisers like Ken Knight should stop trying to divide and rule, stop setting retained against wholetime and concentrate on investing to improve the whole service.

That means taking the real issues faced by retained firefighters seriously and levelling up provision for the benefit of all who work in the service, as well as the public we serve.

CANCER

Support the Be Clear campaign

If you notice blood in your pee, even if it's 'just the once' tell your doctor

Bladder and kidney cancer

Spread the word: blood in your pee can be a symptom of cancer – even if it's 'just the once'

You can help to save lives by supporting this autumn's NHS campaign to raise awareness of blood in pee as a symptom of bladder and kidney cancers.

Be Clear on Cancer

Be Clear on Cancer aims to improve early diagnosis of cancer by raising awareness of symptoms and encouraging people to see their GP earlier. When cancer is picked up early, treatment is more likely to be successful.

Why focus on the symptom blood in pee?

It's a key symptom of around eight in 10 bladder cancers and more than half of kidney cancers. But only a third of people know that unexplained bleeding is a symptom of cancer – over twice as many people know about an unexplained lump.

What is the main message of the new campaign?

If you notice blood in your pee, even if it's "just the once", tell your doctor.

Who is the campaign aimed at?

Bladder and kidney cancers are

more common as people get older – around 95% of those diagnosed are 50 and over, so the campaign is aimed at men and women in this age group. It is also aimed at friends and family who can pass on information and encourage loved ones to make an appointment if they are worried.

Can bladder and kidney cancers be prevented?

The main risk factors for bladder and kidney cancers are associated with lifestyle and around four in 10 of these cancer cases could be prevented every year by making lifestyle changes.

Smoking is the most important cause of both bladder and kidney cancers. In fact, it is by far the most

important preventable cause of cancer in the world. If you currently smoke, your risk of bladder cancer is up to four times that of someone who has never smoked; and, on average, current smokers have a 50% increased risk of getting kidney cancer.

Being overweight or obese also increases the risk of kidney cancer – research has estimated that being overweight or obese causes around a quarter of kidney cancers in the UK each year.

The kind of work that you do may also influence your risk of developing bladder and kidney cancer. There is an increased risk of bladder and kidney cancer if you work, or have worked, in some industries such as rubber and printing

where you are/were exposed to substances that cause cancer.

These substances occur in many forms. They can be solids, liquids, vapours, gases, or dusts and can be breathed in, absorbed through the skin or swallowed.

Your employer has a legal duty to control exposure to these substances in the workplace and the Health and Safety Executive provides information and advice on how to do this.

Key facts about bladder and kidney cancers

- Each year around 16,600 people in England are diagnosed with bladder and kidney cancer – around 15,600 of those diagnosed are 50 and over
- Each year around 7,500 people in England will die from bladder and kidney cancer
- Nearly twice as many men as women die from bladder or kidney cancers each year in England.

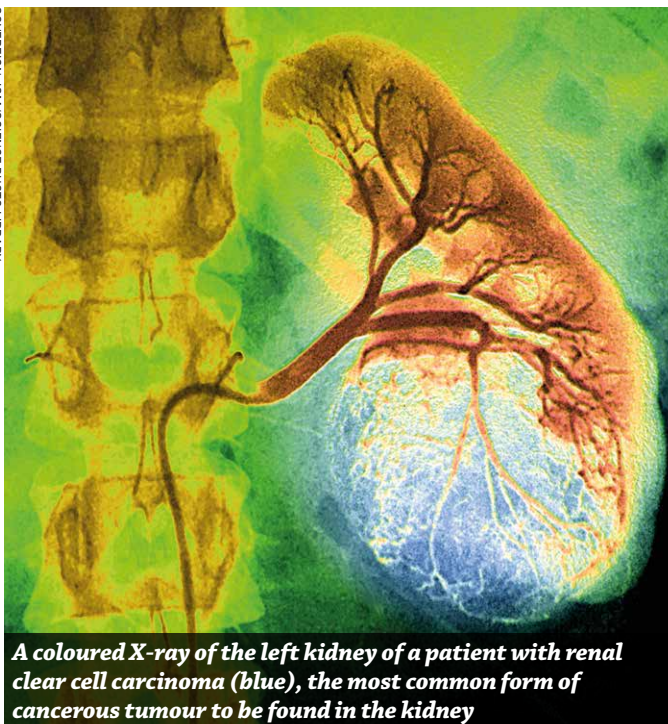
The Hazards health and safety campaign, which is backed by all the major unions, says that bladder cancer has a particular occupational dimension, and lists firefighters as among those workers at risk.

The Health and Safety Executive estimates that in the UK there are 550 new cases of bladder cancer caused by occupational exposure, with 245 deaths.

Find out more

Order free posters and leaflets through orderline.dh.gov.uk or by calling 0300 123 1002

SOVEREIGN, ISM/SCIENCE PHOTO LIBRARY



A coloured X-ray of the left kidney of a patient with renal clear cell carcinoma (blue), the most common form of cancerous tumour to be found in the kidney

Legal Beagle

Pregnancy and paternity: know your rights

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

Q I'm due to be a father for the first time. What are my paternity leave rights?

A The Paternity and Adoption Leave Regulations 2002 entitle fathers and others, including the partner or civil partners of the birth mother/adoptive parent, to ordinary paternity leave (OPL). This is two weeks paid paternity leave on the birth or placement for adoption of a child. This must be one or two consecutive weeks of leave and cannot be odd days or odd weeks.

To be eligible for OPL the father must have been continuously employed for at least 26 weeks ending with the fifteenth week before the expected week of childbirth (EWC). He must be the biological father of the child, or married to, or the partner or civil partner of, the child's mother and have, or expect to have, main responsibility (apart from any responsibility of the mother) for the upbringing of the child.

An employee must give their employer notice of intention to take paternity leave on or before the fifteenth week before the EWC, unless this is not reasonably practical. He must specify the expected week, the length of absence (i.e. one or two weeks), and the date on which he has chosen to begin his leave. Notice must be in writing if requested by the employer but there is no requirement to provide evidence of pregnancy.

The leave cannot be taken before the day of the child's

birth and must be completed within 56 days of the birth. The employee is entitled to choose when to take leave.

The Additional Paternity Leave Regulations 2010 give fathers (and adoptive partners) the right to up to six months of paternity leave, which can be taken once the mother (or other adopter) has returned to work. Some of this leave may be paid if taken during the maternity or adoption pay period.



SATOSHI KAMBAYASHI

Q How will pregnancy affect my day-to-day role?

A Regulation 16 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 places a duty on employers to carry out a risk assessment in respect of new or expectant mothers. Once an employer knows that a firefighter is pregnant, a risk assessment must be undertaken immediately to

consider workplace hazards, such as loss of balance or slipping, manual handling duties and the need to take rest periods. This will need to take into account her duties after the birth if she is breastfeeding.

A common problem that women in all professions encounter, but perhaps more difficult for shift-work such as firefighting, is being able to exercise their entitlement to paid time off during working hours to attend ante-natal appointments.

Although ante-natal care is not legally defined, an employer must not unreasonably refuse time off just because a firefighter has had a lot of appointments close together.

A firefighter is entitled to attend medical examinations and relaxation classes if she notifies employers of the appointment and, if asked, provides proof of pregnancy (such as the MAT B1 certificate issued by doctors or midwives) and a copy of the appointment card.

If the employer's refusal is unreasonable, or the employer fails to pay the pregnant firefighter because she has attended an ante-natal appointment, she may be able to lodge a claim in an employment tribunal within three months of the date of the missed appointment or the date of the failure to pay her. She can also claim unlawful sex or pregnancy discrimination and can be awarded compensation.

There is no minimum qualifying period of employment for these rights.

Prize quiz



A Nike+ Sportwatch GPS



HOW TO ENTER

To win a Nike+ Sportwatch GPS powered by TomTom send your answers by 13 December 2013 on a postcard to: Prize Competition (Nov/Dec 2013), FBU Head Office, Bradley House, 68 Coombe Road, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT2 7AE. Please include your name, address and membership number. The winner will be selected at random from all correct entries.

1 'Just slip out the back, Jack. Make a new plan, Stan. You don't need to be coy, Roy. Just get yourself free.'

- A – Paul Simon
- B – Simon and Garfunkel
- C – The Bee Gees
- D – Art Garfunkel

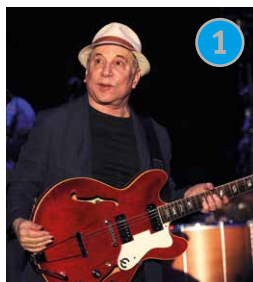
2 'Cause it's a bittersweet symphony, this life.'

- A – Blur
- B – Verve
- C – Arctic Monkeys
- D – The Killers



3 'You better start swimming or sink like a stone, cause the times they are a-changin'.'

- A – Bob Dylan
- B – Leonard Cohen
- C – Lou Reed
- D – Jimi Hendrix

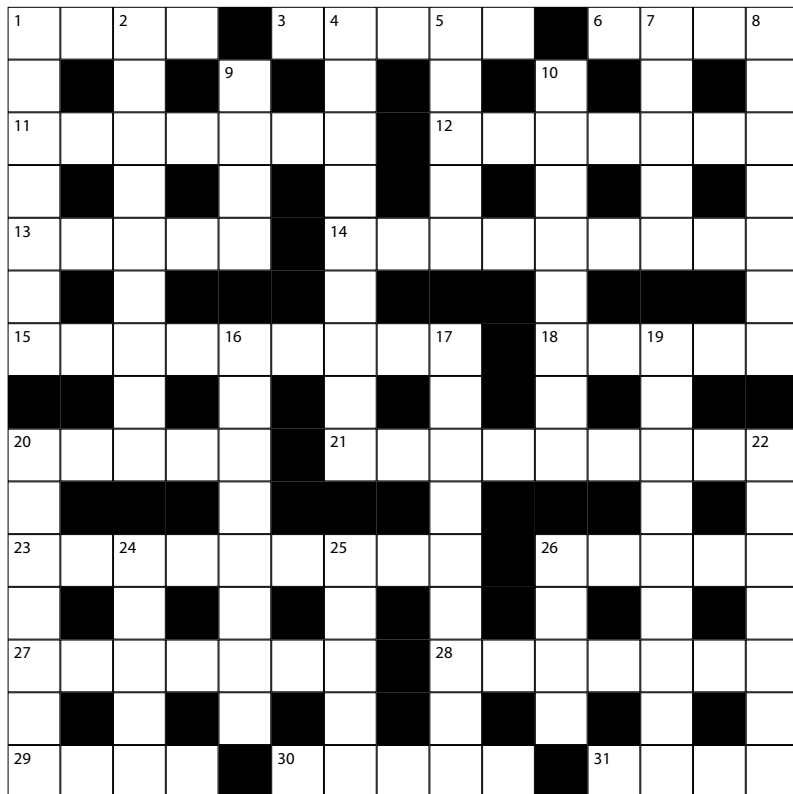
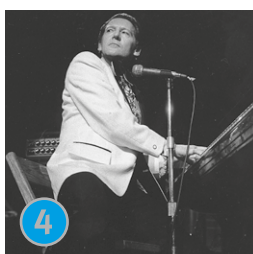


4 'You shake my nerves and you rattle my brain. Too much love drives a man insane. You broke my will, but what a thrill. Goodness gracious, great balls of fire!'

- A – Little Richard
- B – Elvis Presley
- C – Johnny Cash
- D – Jerry Lee Lewis

5 'Pleased to meet you. Hope you guess my name.'

- A – The Beatles
- B – The Who
- C – The Rolling Stones
- D – Pink Floyd



CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1** Something to drag through your hair (4)
- 3** See 27 (5)
- 6** What we fight (apart from pension cuts) (4)
- 11** Horserider puts foot in it! (7)
- 12** Navratilova, Hingis or Cole (7)
- 13** See 27 (5)
- 14** Unenthusiastic (9)
- 15** 'Sir' who recommends cuts (3,6)
- 18** Scottish island – and its malt (5)
- 20** European capital (5)
- 21** Jews' temple (9)
- 23** Without remedy (9)
- 26** Fish __; Tooth __, or fake jewellery (5)
- 27, 13, 3** Environmental campaigners opposed to 10 (7, 2, 3, 6)
- 28** Quick coffee? (7)
- 29** Vegetable unable to hold water?! (4)
- 30** It's not over! (5)
- 31** Not far (4)

DOWN

- 1** Priest's habit? (7)
- 2** Wetting agent (9)
- 4** Vegetable with spears (9)
- 5** People and language of south India and Sri Lanka (5)
- 7** Balearic island famed for its partying (5)
- 8** Precisely (7)
- 9** Soft French cheese (4)
- 10** Controversial method of extracting fossil fuels (8)
- 16** Traditionally worn by a bull – and now popular with people (8)
- 17** Citrus fruit (9)
- 19** Make laws (9)
- 20** Causing hurt or distress (7)
- 22** Voter (7)
- 24** Country of Pinochet's 1973 fascist coup (5)
- 25** Bowl (5)
- 26** Sit still! (4)

Last month's answers and winners



Crossword solution October

October quiz answers

- 1** – A – One Foot In The Grave
- 2** – C – Charlie Chaplin
- 3** – B – The Wizard of Oz
- 4** – D – Inspector Clouseau
- 5** – B – Russell Crowe

Winner of August/September quiz

Damian Griffiths, Bristol

Station Cat

Money to burn for some in the service

Pickles finds a fat £90k in his jar

 We're all in this together, episode 67: Everyone else in the public sector is tightening their belts, but communities secretary Eric Pickles – who could do with a bit of belt-tightening – seems to have money to burn. He's just bunged £90,000 of our money at lawyers in a failed attempt to scrap the check-off system of collecting union subscriptions through salaries. If he had succeeded, he would have saved his department £300 a year in administration costs. The £90,000 bill would cover the cost of check-off for the next 300 years.

£200k not enough? Use your pension ...

 We're all in it together, episode 103: While his firefighters worry about their pensions, Cambridgeshire chief fire officer Graham Stagg left the job in September – and came back in October – with his old salary and having released his pension. He doesn't like it being mentioned, though, and wrote rather sniffily on his blog: "It is also perfectly normal for there to be an assumption that senior staff are feathering their nests using a means unavailable to other staff in the organisation." Surely not. Why, Mr Stagg's salary isn't much more than £200,000. But yes, the ungrateful union man in Mr Stagg's empire, Jamie Wyatt,



still complains: "It's unfair that any senior officer can retire and claim both pension and salary, and yet firefighters on the front line could end up losing both under these new proposals."

... you won't be the first one

 We're all in this together, episode 3,487: Every London firefighter knows how upset the London Fire Brigade commissioner Ron Dobson is that they're striking over their pensions. Mr Dobson isn't striking. But of course, he doesn't need to. Two years ago he retired with an estimated £700,000 pay-off. Like Mr Stagg, he gained immediate access to his pension entitlements – a maximum of £133,000 a year, two-thirds of his £200,000 salary. Then he walked straight back into his old job. He took it at a lower salary than before, but his salary plus his pension bring his annual income close to the £200,000 he was earning before.

Just who has lost the thread here?

 What really worries Mr Dobson, apparently, is that firefighters might wear their tunics on demonstrations about pensions and about cuts. Why does this worry him? Well, he says, they could get damaged during the demonstration. Or lost, presumably when the firefighters take off all their clothes in Parliament Square. Or eaten by the silkworms that

Tunics, and only tunics, to the fore as demonstrating firefighters pass Downing Street



infest the streets around the Mother of Parliaments. (All right, all right, I made the last one up.) He wrote instructing them that they were on no account to wear their tunics. Such is the respect that London firefighters have for their chief that they turned up en masse for the demonstration – wearing their tunics.

Harrowing times for Labour

 Councillor Susan Ward may have less time to spend on the affairs of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority than she expected when she was elected to it in 2010. Back then, the Harrow Conservative group she leads had lost the election; Labour ran Harrow and Councillor Ward was the opposition leader. But now she leads the council. No, there has not been an election; the voters of Harrow have not changed their minds and decided to give the Conservatives a chance after all. A split in the Labour group has given Councillor Hall her moment in the sun, supported by a disaffected group of Labour councillors. Harrow residents elected Labour, and they've got Councillor Ward. She doesn't seem to mind, though; she says she's excited.

Our friends in the east ...

 Fortunately, while two Essex FRS senior managers were in China's Jiangsu province, they did

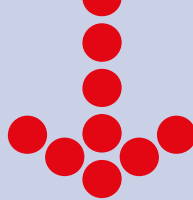
nothing to upset the authorities. To do so could have been extremely bad for the health of assistant chief fire officer Paul Hill and assistant divisional officer Costas Olymbus. The guys in charge in Jiangsu province have some quite nasty places in which to lock up people who have the bad taste to contradict them.

No doubt Messrs Hill and Olymbus restricted themselves to their brief, which according to Essex FRS was to "reinforce the friendly links" between Essex and Jiangsu.

... we pay, they sell

 Well, perhaps Messrs Hill and Olymbus went a teeny weeny bit further than "reinforcing friendly links." You see, their trip was paid for by a Chelmsford company, E2V, who manufacture thermal imaging cameras that are sold to fire and rescue services across the globe. They sell to Essex FRS, and also hope to sell to the Jiangsu fire service. And now we look at it again, we see that Messrs Hill and Olymbus were also supposed to "help research and understand Jiangsu's needs for thermal image cameras, to support E2V in developing trade links and orders for its own products". Or to put it another way, they were a couple of salesmen for E2V – and also for Essex FRS, whose training they were to promote. Your Cat wonders if the taxpayers know that they are paying Mr Hill £114,000 a year to be a salesman for E2V.

25-year badges



Mark Pittock (r), Preston Circus, East Sussex, receives his 25-year badge from branch chair Steve Liszka



Wayne Hilton (r), Preston Circus, East Sussex, receives his 25-year badge from branch chair Steve Liszka



Ian Smith (l), A watch, East Sussex control, receives his 25-year badge from workplace safety rep Lorraine Coppard



Steve Huish (r), Weston, receives his 25-year badge from Avon brigade secretary Chris Taylor



Paul Chapman (r), Princes Street, Ipswich, RDS, receives his 25-year badge from region 9 education and learning official Adrian Mayhew with Princes Street RDS firefighters looking on



Andy Holloway (c, l), receives his 25-year badge from Avon brigade secretary Chris Taylor with Kingswood white watch looking on



Mark Clynh (l), Marine station, Cleveland, receives his 25-year badge from Marine branch secretary Peter Rodgers



Andy Jones (l), white watch, Droitwich, Hereford and Worcester, receives his 25-year badge from SC Dan Quinn



Gary Shortland (c), Devon and Somerset, receives his 25-year badge in the company of station colleagues



Kevin Parris (r), Halling, Kent, (station since closed), receives his 25-year badge from brigade rep Mark Burren



Mark Armstrong (r), Highfields, Nottinghamshire, receives his 25-year badge from officers' rep Colin Poyzer



Tynemouth, Tyne and Wear, firefighters (l-r), **Richy Armstrong, Dave Walton, Jim McCabe** and **Gary Scorer** receive their 25-year badges from brigade chair Russ King



Liam Hudson (r), specialist response manager, Kent, receives his 25-year badge from Kent officers' chair Dickie Baugh



Mike Marot (r), Lincolnshire west division, receives his 25-year badge from Lincolnshire brigade chair Chris Hides



Pete Doran (r), white watch, Droitwich, Hereford and Worcester, receives his 25-year badge from SC Dan Quinn



Paul Mead (r), Lincolnshire HQ, receives his 25-year badge from Lincolnshire brigade chair Chris Hides



Sean Abbott (l), City Forum, Islington fire safety, receives his 25-year badge from Jim Wennell NE Area H&S rep, London region



Mark Stock (r), green watch, Chelmsford, receives his 25-year badge from general secretary Matt Wrack at a TUC rally in London



Dave Stevenson (r), red watch, Ilkeston, receives his 25-year badge from Derbyshire vice-chair Ben Keiller with Ilkeston red watch looking on



Mark Watson (r), driver training, North Yorkshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade health and safety rep Alistair Biggs



Dave Chalk (r), Lincolnshire training centre, receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair Chris Hides with training centre colleagues looking on



Northern Ireland firefighters (l-r), **Rod O'Hare** (brigade organiser, looking on), **Mark Darrall** (Assistant Group Commander H&S HQ), **Brian Martin** (green watch, Crescent Link), **Jonathan Dunn** (red watch Crescent Link), **Aubrey Taylor** (green watch, Crescent Link), **Tony Healey** (white watch, Northland), receive 25-year badges from Jim Quinn (region 2 regional secretary)



Derbyshire officers branch members (l-r), **Pete Maltby**, **Ronnie Barker**, **Dave Lovett**, **Pete Aykroyd**, **Mark Bailey**, **Simon Fairchild** and **Alan Richmond** receive their 25-year badges from region 6 EC member Dave Limer



Gary Evans (r), Appledore, receives his 25-year badge from Devon and Somerset brigade organiser Andy Gould



Ian Copestake (r), Arnold, Nottingham, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Steve Hare



Steve Petch (r), blue watch, Preston Circus, East Sussex, receives his 25-year badge from branch chair Steve Liszka



Michael Simpson (l), Marine station, Cleveland, receives his 25 year-badge from Marine branch secretary Peter Rodgers



Ian Osborn (r), white watch, Ramsgate, receives his 25-year badge from Annie Shepherd with (l to r), Stuart Morris, Larry Walters and Dickie Warne



Daz Fletcher (r), green watch, Ilkeston receives his 25-year badge from Derbyshire vice-chair Ben Keiller with Ilkeston green watch looking on



Peter Connor (r), white watch, Lee Green, London, (now retired), receives his 25-year badge from Greenwich borough secretary Ian Smith



Richard Chamberlain (r), white watch, Preston Circus, East Sussex, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Chris Scholes



Gary Carr-Smith (l), receives his 25-year badge from Avon brigade secretary Chris Taylor

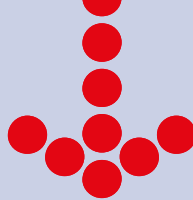


Farid Ali (c,l), green watch, Ward End, receives his 25-year badge from West Midlands brigade secretary Paul Cockburn with green watch colleagues looking on



Jon Brown (l), receives his 25-year badge from Avon brigade secretary Chris Taylor

25-year badges



Dave Jobson (l), Moortown, West Yorkshire, receives his 25-year badge from general secretary Matt Wrack at an FBU closures protest march in Leeds



Victoria Henry (c), blue watch, Northolt, London, receives her 25-year badge from region 10 NW area secretary David Shek with (l - r), FF Fitzgerald, FF Connelly, North West secretary Dave Shek, FF Tweedie, FF Kelly, CM Henry, CM Smith, FF Tierney, WM Godden and FF Malde



Paul Bushell (r), blue watch, Beckenham, London, receives his 25-year badge from Beckenham branch rep Terry Leigh



Richie Hammond (l), Mid and West Wales, receives his 25-year badge from region 8 ONC rep Mick Higgins



Richard Orton (r), red watch, Kingswood, receives his 25-year badge from Avon brigade secretary Chris Taylor



Bruce Walton (r), Stokesley RDS, receives his 25-year badge from divisional secretary Kelvin Thewlis at Northallerton station with Northallerton RDS crew and Bruce's son, Paul (far right), looking on



Chris Harding (r), Avon USAR, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Chris Taylor



Stan Clarke (l), City Forum, Islington Fire Safety, receives his 25-year badge from Jim Wennell NE Area H&S rep, London region



Paul Henderson (l), Marine station, Cleveland, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Peter Rodgers



Kevin Hurrell (r), green watch, Plumstead, London, receives his 25-year badge from Greenwich borough secretary Ian Smith



Pete Maltby (r), Derbyshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade vice-chair Ben Keiller



Darren Rossiter (r), Bridgwater, receives his 25-year badge from region 13 RDS rep Leigh Redman

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REGION 13 Cornwall, Devon and

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

Please send prints or
digital files to: Firefighter,
FBU, 68 Coombe Road,
Kingston upon Thames, KT2 7AE
or firefighter@fbu.org.uk.
Please include full details for
every picture – 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 and when it was taken.