

FireFighter

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

October 2014

**WHY
PUBLIC
OWNERSHIP IS
ONLY ANSWER
FOR ENERGY
CRISIS**
See p10

PAY
a good deal for
CFOs
why not for
US?

**Chiefs' pay rises
outstrip ours by 40%**
See p14





Matt Wrack

We have to stick together

A newly released British film – *Pride* – tells the true story of the Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners (LGSM) group and their tireless support for miners and their families in Wales during the 1984/85 miners' strike.

It's a great film – very funny and very, very powerful. I would recommend it to anyone. It includes many moving and inspiring references to the need for solidarity, for people sticking together to fight for what is right.

This is a message FBU members should remember as we continue our pension campaign against the government. We can only make any progress in this battle if we stick together. Our arguments are right and our cause is just.

But we face an enemy that has many weapons at its disposal – the British government. Against such opposition we have only the strength of our unity, our solidarity and the power of our arguments. But these are also powerful weapons and we will not give up fighting for what is right.

As we go to press, we have had some better dialogue with the government – but that does not in any way guarantee progress and we may need to fight again. I know you will be ready to do so.

Unfortunately, there are some who have completely forgotten how the gains of the past were won. Our current pension rights were

never handed to us on a plate. Previous generations had to campaign and fight for them.

We had to fight to win occupational pensions. We campaigned for the right to compensation for those killed or injured. We campaigned for survivor benefits. We fought a long, hard battle for the pension rights of retained firefighters.

Some of those in positions of authority are today trying to play off one section of the workforce against another. The same people have never



Sticking together to fight for what is right: Members of the public sign an FBU petition

done anything to improve the conditions of firefighters. Now they want to enjoy the benefits we – the FBU – have won over many decades but at the same time assist the government in destroying those benefits for firefighters in the future.

It is a grotesque betrayal of everything the fire service should be about – teamwork, solidarity, looking after each other. And that is why today we continue the fight to defend the gains of the past and prevent those in power from simply turning the clock back and robbing us of our pensions, pay and conditions.

CFO pay

A new report has shown that the rate of pay for chief fire officers has increased substantially more than that of frontline firefighters over the past 10 years.

At this year's TUC conference in Liverpool I spoke at a fringe event discussing the need for workers across the country to receive a pay rise.

The current situation of a minority of people receiving huge pay increases far outstripping what the majority of workers get is

a sickening indictment of government policy.

The report makes for depressing reading, but on 18 October the FBU is marching through London as part of the TUC's "Britain Needs A Pay Rise" campaign. Our voices need to be heard by the government and politicians of all parties. I would strongly urge members to come along – bring your friends and families.

Marlie Farm

The union has used new and innovative campaign techniques to highlight the injustice to the families of

Brian Wembridge and Geoff Wicker killed in the Marlie Farm fire as well as the other firefighters who suffered injury. Using social media Twitter and Thunderclap, we were able to communicate to over 190,000 people simultaneously the need for East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service to drop its appeal against liability and pay the compensation owed to the firefighters' families.

We will continue to innovate as we go forward with the Marlie Farm campaign. If you have not already signed the petition, there is still time to do so at www.justiceforfirefighters.co.uk

Ring of Fire tour

Liverpool also saw the launch of the union's Ring of Fire tour which toured the country promoting our new report *Sounding the alarm: the future of our fire and rescue service*. The report has established that, since 2010, over 5,000 frontline firefighters have been axed, 39 fire stations permanently closed and 999 emergency response times slowing.

Ahead of the next general election, we hope to engage the public about the dangers the current austerity drive is doing to the fire and rescue service.

For our service to thrive we need the next government to commit to an anti-austerity agenda and begin funding public services properly.

We are under attack on many fronts. We have no choice but to fight back on each of them.

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Meet Cambridge FBU brigade secretary Cameron Matthews who, with colleagues Matt House, Jo Shippey and Leon Collins, ran, cycled and paddled "against the sun" to raise money for medical research



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ANDREW WARD

The FBU delegation at this year's Trades Union Congress in Liverpool – report page 7
From left: Andy Noble (EC North East), Otis Graham (B&EMM national chair), Alan McLean (president), Samantha Rye (NWC national chair), Matt Wrack (general secretary), Tam McFarlane (EC South West) and Ian Murray (EC Yorks and Humberside)

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Matt Wrack explains the FBU's doubts about the Bill to MPs

‘Heroism’ law unnecessary and unclear, Wrack tells MPs

Heroism Bill

The government’s proposed “Heroism Bill” is unnecessary and unclear in its intentions, Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary, told MPs last month.

The bill’s supporters say it would offer extra legal protection for people who were sued for negligence after they acted “heroically” or in the public interest.

Government ministers claim that people are often deterred from taking action to benefit others as they worry about the threat of being sued if things go wrong.

They say the Social Action,

Responsibility and Heroism Bill

2014-15 would deter contrived lawsuits and ensure that courts are on the side of people who have acted heroically.

Critics have called the bill “vacuous”, saying it would do nothing that the current law does not already do and deals with a media perception rather than reality.

For example, former Thatcher government minister Lord Young, now prime minister David Cameron’s “enterprise adviser”, has claimed in a health and safety report for government, with absolutely no evidence, that fire-fighters might not respond to incidents due to health and safety laws.

Wrack said: “For us, health and safety is a life and death matter, and we object strongly to people trivialising it and turning it into a joke or headline-grabbing stories.”

Wrack also told the public bill committee of MPs considering the

legislation that it could have serious consequences for health and safety procedures in the fire and rescue service and could even end up diluting the protection available for firefighters.

Wrack spoke about firefighter Paul Metcalfe, who lost his life 15 years ago in Manchester while attempting to rescue a member of the public from drowning in open water – a type of rescue he had not been trained or equipped to undertake by his employer.

He questioned what the Bill’s wording “acting for the benefit of society” meant, saying the legislation might have the unexpected consequences of employers being able to put individuals into dangerous circumstances and ask them to effectively perform an impossible task for which they have not been trained, resourced or equipped to deal with.

Wrack said that what one person might perceive as heroic could also, in some situations, be considered reckless.

“For us, health and safety is a life and death matter, and we object strongly to people trivialising it and turning it into a joke or headline-grabbing stories”

Michael Nicholas:
Government
downgraded equality
issues as soon as it
took power



SOUNDING OFF

Keep up the struggle

The fight for equality must continue, says FBU Black and Ethnic Minority Members section national secretary Michael Nicholas

The FBU's Black and Ethnic Minority Members (B&EMM) section celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2015. In 1995 a few frustrated yet determined members met with the then FBU leadership to discuss their experience of the fire service. From that meeting B&EMM was born and became a structured section within the FBU rule book.

Alongside our other equality section comrades, we began to influence the changes that the fire and rescue service needed to bring it in line with the rest of the public sector on equality issues. The fire service started to look a little different and attitudes that were commonplace for decades started to change.

Many principal managers were taken out of their "comfort zone", control of the equality agenda became centralised and, for a long period, most FRSs were singing from the same hymn sheet.

There was progress and B&EMM reps played a significant role in ensuring that organisational change. We were an integral part of all initiatives that had an impact on black and minority ethnic staff. We had a voice within our union and a 2008 survey confirmed that a majority of our members were happy in the fire service – in complete contrast to how they felt 10 years before.

This government immediately downgraded equality issues on taking office. It saw the strategy in place as overbearing bureaucracy and felt that equality and diversity should be a "local" issue. All the initiatives, many of them successful, were rolled back or disbanded. New funding arrangements meant that savage cuts had a massive negative impact on the concept of a fire service fit for all.

Many equality "pioneers" have left and the fight for a service that is fit for purpose continues. If you want a fire service that is fair, progressive and inclusive, please get involved as the struggle continues.



The FBU's blimp made its debut at the TUC in Liverpool in September. With the message "We Rescue People, Not Banks" it will be used to promote the union's campaigns heading into the next general election. The blimp will be on the TUC's "Britain Needs A Pay Rise" demonstration in London on 18 October. TUC report – page 7

Union exposes crisis in service

Cuts

The fire and rescue service is at a crisis point, the FBU has warned in an in-depth report that details cuts to the service and their impact.

Sounding the alarm: the future of our fire and rescue service, compiled by Dr Paul Hampton, shows that since 2010 more than 5,000 frontline firefighter jobs have been cut and 39 fire stations closed. Over the past 10 years 999 emergency response times



Andrew Wiaro
FBU South West EC member Tam MacFarlane launches the report at the TUC

have, on average, increased by two minutes.

Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary, said: "The fire and rescue service has reached a crisis point in its history. The next five years will determine what kind of

service it will be for decades to come: either a first-class, professional fire and rescue service, or an increasingly threadbare, fragmented and piecemeal sticking plaster."

The report forms the basis of arguments the union will make to politicians, heading into the next general election, about how to save the fire and rescue service and allow it to thrive.

A summary of the report has been sent to all members.

✚ The full report is at: <http://bit.ly/1sBeAsT>

Time to tackle energy firms, says FBU

Energy policy

Large energy firms should be taken into public ownership in order to tackle rising consumer costs and climate change, the FBU has demanded.

In a new pamphlet, *It's time to take over the big energy firms*, the FBU joins the debate over the future of the energy sector at a time when 5 million British citizens live in fuel poverty.

Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary, said:

"Public ownership makes the perpetrators of the energy crisis pay for the damage they have done, whilst giving democratic power back to those who need it.

"We hope it will be debated by our colleagues in other unions and by other workers discussing the case for an alternative to the policies of the coalition government."

✚ Time for public ownership – page 10

✚ See the pamphlet at <http://bit.ly/1qL1Tjz>



Rab Chalmers



Tam Tierney

Fighters for freedom and their comrades

Rab Chalmers and Tam Tierney

Two Scottish FBU members who played central roles in the union died in July.

Former Scottish secretary Tam Tierney was laid to rest in the small town of Tonneins, south west France, where he had retired. Rab Chalmers was remembered at Blantyre cemetery in Lanarkshire.

Former national officer Dave Patton writes: I'm not sad now that Rab and Tam have died. You see, I have no memories of them which make me sad.

Central role

They both played a central role in our union's many struggles. Struggles for better conditions; for better pay; for fairness and equality; against injustice wherever in the world oppressed peoples fought for the right to live with the freedoms we enjoyed.

For those of you reading this who didn't know them ... Rab and Tam were key players when the old Strathclyde brigade was newly formed. They served our union at branch; divisional; brigade and at Scottish regional level in a variety of roles over their entire service.

Rab (who visited South Africa in the apartheid years) was our Anti-Apartheid rep when Mandela was given the freedom of my home town, Glasgow. He was there when Mandela walked onto a rain-soaked George Square, danced and made all our efforts instantly worthwhile.

Promotion or the FBU

Tam (a second generation firefighter with his own son now serving with the Scottish fire and rescue service) did all of the above and also served on the officers' national committee for many years.

When faced with further promotion or staying with the FBU (Oh, yes. That was the reality for many back then) Tam told those sent to make the offer to "go away", as only he would have said it.

We marched all over the UK for our rights and for the rights of others and Tam and Rab were always there.

We fought hard and probably partied harder than we should have too.

They leave behind kids, grandkids, family, friends and comrades who will miss them of course.

But sad? I'm only sad that I'll now have no fresh memories with them.

Strong believer in workers' rights

Paul Cockburn

Paul Cockburn, FBU brigade secretary for the West Midlands, passed away recently following a fight against cancer.

He served as a firefighter for 24 years, beginning his career at Kings Norton in Birmingham, followed by Northfield, Highgate, Hay Mills and the training centre.

Paul was a caring man who

believed in other people and for the past two years represented over 1,400 firefighters.

He had a strong belief in better workers' rights and conditions and fought every day to defend them.

He will be greatly missed by all in the fire service and the trade union movement. Paul is survived by his wife Lynette and sons Robert and Andrew.



IN BRIEF

Charity single

 Oliver Richards' new single

Sometimes is raising money for The Fire Fighters Charity. The Aberdeen singer, who supported the union's



nationwide Ring of Fire tour, is donating all proceeds to the charity which supports injured members of the fire and rescue service.

■ You can download the song at apple.com/itunes

Pension talks continue

 FBU representatives have continued to meet the government over pensions.

Fire minister Penny Mordaunt has confirmed that the introduction of new pension regulations will be delayed by at least two months.

Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary, said: "Although the minister has suggested areas where significant progress might be made, the FBU has sought additional advice from legal and actuarial advisors on several issues.

"Many of these issues are complex and specialist advice is necessary to ensure the rights of our members are properly considered.

"Our priority is to obtain improved pension proposals for consideration by members."

Further meetings are scheduled with ministers, civil servants and Department for Communities and Local Government officials.

NEWS FOCUS

Delegates back FBU motion opposing any attempt to remove the right of emergency service workers to take industrial action



JESS HURD/REPORTDIGITAL.CO.UK

Delegates applaud the memory of RMT general secretary Bob Crow, who died in March this year

TUC backs FBU policies

FBU delegates were successful in advancing union policies on pensions, flooding, public services, anti-union laws and health and safety at the Trades Union Congress in Liverpool last month

Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary, called on delegates to support a motion calling for a cast-iron commitment from the party that any future Labour government would guarantee an increase in the state pension and move away from identical pension schemes for all occupations. This was very well received and the motion was carried.

Tam McFarlane, EC member for the South West, proposed a successful motion calling for fire and rescue services to have a statutory duty to respond to flood emergencies.

Ian Murray, EC member for Yorkshire and Humberside, successfully moved an

amendment to a motion on the future of public services to the effect that any incoming government after the 2015 general election should immediately scrap cuts in funding for public services planned by the current coalition government.

"If we want to save public services, then they first need to be properly funded," he told Congress.

Kevin Brown, EC member for the North

"If we want to save public services, then they first need to be properly funded"

West, spoke about the importance of strong trade unions. Delegates backed his motion opposing any attempt to remove the right to take industrial action from emergency services.

Andy Noble, EC member for the North East, spoke in a health and safety debate, raising the union's campaign for justice for firefighters killed at Marlie Farm.

Matt Wrack also urged the RMT to withdraw a motion calling for a ceasefire in Ukraine. The ceasefire is supported by the FBU but the motion was one-sided and failed to address all aspects of the violence emerging in the Ukraine or even to mention the role played by Russia in the conflict.

In a fringe event on the dangers climate change poses for the fire and rescue service, Dave Green, FBU national officer, highlighted the magnificent role firefighters had played earlier this year saying that "the winter floods were the biggest mobilisation of the fire and rescue service since WW2".



FBU kicks off Ring Of Fire

Firefighters at the TUC conference in Liverpool were shown once again that they have the firm support of the public and delegates in the union movement in the continuing battle to save the fire and rescue service from further cutbacks.

As the first stop on the FBU's Ring of Fire anti-cuts tour, TUC delegates were treated to a set from The Farm, music from Oliver Richards and speeches from several speakers, including TUC general secretary Frances O'Grady.

Placards reading "Save our Fire and Rescue Service" were distributed to delegates who took part in a huge group photo to send a message to the government that firefighters and the public will not tolerate the



VIEW
FROM THE
AERIAL LADDER
PLATFORM

campaign at the TUC

continuing assault upon firefighters and their profession.

The Ring of Fire tour promoted the FBU's recently published report *Sounding the alarm: the future of our fire and rescue service* which has found that since 2010

over 5,000 firefighter jobs have been lost and 39 fire stations closed, as well as 999 emergency response times increasing.

The UK general election is scheduled for May next year and the FBU intends to raise the future of the fire and rescue service as

a prominent electoral issue.

The damage done to the fire and rescue service by austerity is dangerous for the public as well as firefighters and must not be allowed to continue.

PICTURE: ANDREW WIARD

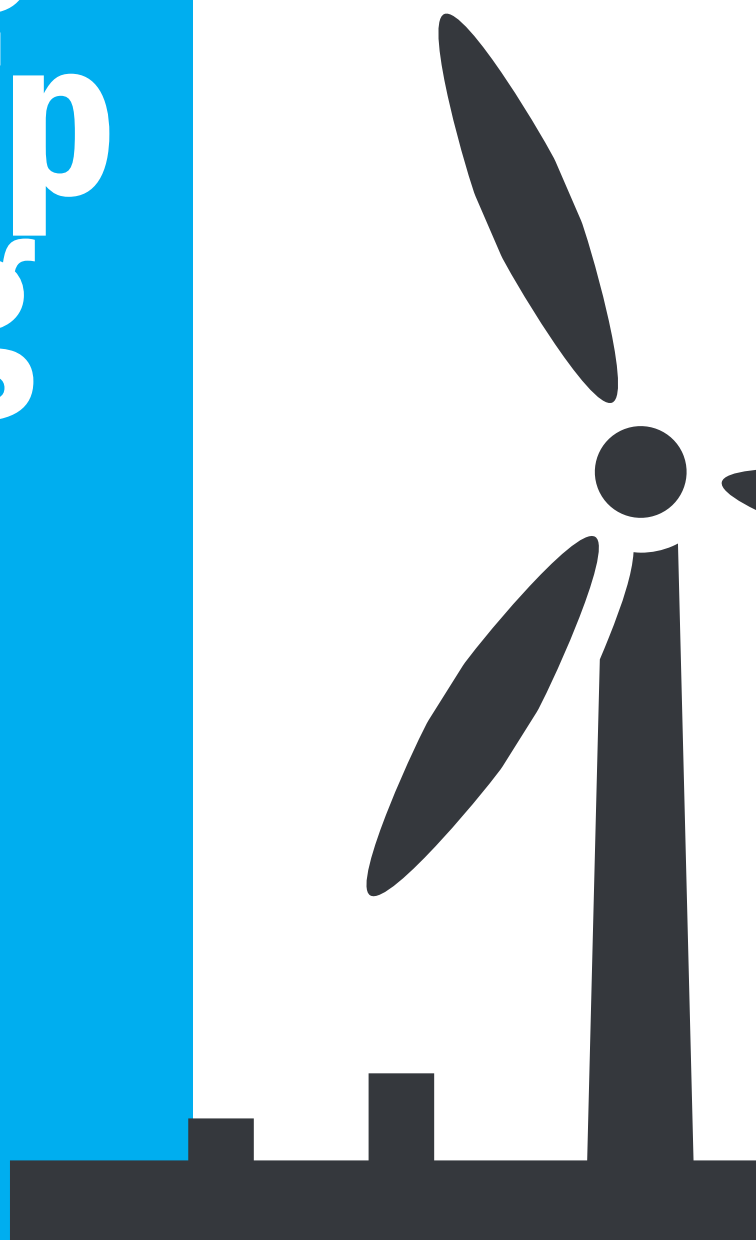
Market has failed – it's time for public ownership of the big energy firms

A new FBU pamphlet *It's time to take over the big energy firms* shows how privatisation has replaced the public interest with profit and led to fuel poverty and energy shortages and that public ownership with workers and consumers represented is the solution

The big energy companies are robbing us blind. Six months after last autumn's price rise, SSE alone declared £1.5bn profits. SSE is one of the "Big Six" energy companies responsible for generating 98% of all energy in the country. The Big Six have us all by the throat.

The gas and electricity industries used to be publicly owned. They made up a network, a natural monopoly. Politicians knew they could not have 50,000 firms all digging up the road to connect the gas and water and, later, electricity supplied by competing firms to people's homes. So they went for "gas and water socialism", a unified supply provided by public utilities. Later the whole system was nationalised.

Thatcher privatised the industry, promising competition and cheaper fuel bills. It did not happen, and could not happen. Instead, we have all been ripped



The national grid needs a 25% capacity surplus in case of unexpected surges in demand. After privatisation the surplus is only 4%

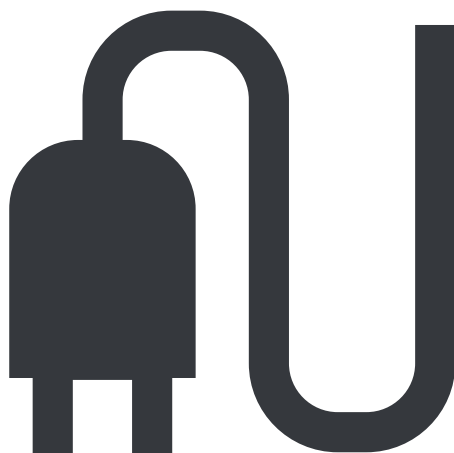
off by private companies interested only in profit.

The unified network of the national grid made planning possible. For instance, the grid anticipated a record surge of 2,800 megawatts when a million kettles were switched on at half time during the England v West Germany World Cup semi-final in 1990. (England lost in a penalty shoot-out.)

Danger level

The planners know they need a 25% capacity surplus in case of unexpected surges in demand. The national grid, now privatised, is running at a danger level of only 4% surplus capacity.

Could the lights go out? The Big Six are driven by short term profits. They do not plan. They are not investing. As energy economist Dieter Helm puts it: "The



period (since privatisation) has, in consequence, been one focussed on sweating inherited assets, not creating them." This is the economics of slash and burn.

As FBU general secretary Matt Wrack points out in the introduction to an FBU report on energy published last month, it is a scandal that 25,000 die because of cold each winter in the UK as a result of fuel poverty. The reason is escalating energy bills and inadequate insulation, making it a choice between "heating and eating".

Climate change

Climate change is the most important issue confronting our future. Human economic activity is playing a part in this.

Carbon and other emissions from burning fossil fuels like coal and gas are at the root of the problem.

But, while energy generation is in private hands, we have no say as to how the energy we consume is produced.

In Britain, the Big Six decide on the basis of profit. They do not have to pay the costs of climate change – the rest of us do.

We need to move to using more renewable sources of energy in a planned way. At present commitment to renewables is gesture politics. And it does not come cheap. Scottish landowners (a mega-rich and underserving lot) are due to collect £1bn in rent on windfarms over the next few years.

A House of Commons subcommittee estimates that over the next 10 to 20 years we need to invest between £200m and £1tn in our energy future. Investment is vital, but all the Big Six are interested in doing is counting the money.

It is increasingly recognised that private energy firms have failed and are out of control.

In Germany, 44 new municipal

companies have been set up and more than 100 energy concessions taken into public ownership since 2007.

We cannot plan what we cannot control, and we cannot control what we do not own. We need to take the Big Six back into public ownership. The FBU report, *It's time to take over the big energy firms*, proposes that:

Workers' councils

■ Workers in the plant would be organised in workers' councils to elect their representatives. In addition there would be representatives of consumers' associations and spokespeople from local government to take account of environmental and local concerns.

■ Boards should be set up at plant, regional and national levels in the energy industry. At all levels there should be workers in the industry, consumer representatives and government appointees on the boards.

As Matt Wrack says in his introduction: "Most politicians look to the market for solutions (to the problems associated with the energy industry) – but these plainly do not work." In fact 'the market' is the problem. Public ownership points the way to the solution to a secure future for our energy supply."



Fossil fuels are at the root of climate change, but while energy generation is in private hands we have no say as to how the energy we consume is produced

fee
grievance
assistance
dismissal
compensation
conciliation
wages
discrimination
solicitors
claim
dispute
appeal
legal
acas

TRIBUNAL GUIDANCE

The FBU and its solicitors Thompsons have published new guidance on employment tribunals to take into account recently imposed changes to the rules governing them

Employment tribunals (ETs) deal with many disputes in the workplace. Claims that can be taken to an ET include unfair dismissal, unlawful discrimination and unlawful deduction of wages.

Several rules designed to prevent disputes reaching ETs are in place. A grievance (not applicable where you have been dismissed) and an appeal must be lodged promptly or penalties may apply. Early conciliation by the conciliation service ACAS is also be required.

If your grievance and appeal fail or are not concluded within 28 days of the issue/incident that gave rise to the grievance (or, in the case of dismissal, the hearing/decision) and you wish to proceed to an ET, the next stage is to apply for FBU legal assistance and ACAS

on employment tribunal deadline

early conciliation at the same time.

It is a mandatory requirement for anyone who believes they may have an ET claim to contact ACAS before lodging a claim. If your issue is not entirely settled, ACAS will issue an “early conciliation certificate” to you and your employer allowing you to proceed to an ET.

Legal assistance

Thanks to the FBU’s partnership with its solicitors Thompsons, the union offers legal assistance to members who face an ET.

You can download the application form for legal assistance at www.fbu.org.uk/membership/legal-advice/legal-forms.

Please ask your branch secretary

for help with filling it out. It is crucial that we get all the right information — including the reasons for your dismissal/complaint — so that we can provide you with the best support.

For protection from ET fees, FBU head office must receive your application 28 days or more before the deadline by which you must file your ET grievance.

FBU head office will acknowledge receipt of your application and let you know if your application has been successful – as long as you have submitted it promptly, ie when 28 days have expired since the issue/incident/dismissal, or (if sooner) when your grievance (not applicable in dismissal cases) and appeal fail, this will be well within your time limit.

If your application for legal assistance is received by head office less than 28 days before your deadline, you will need to submit your own ET claim and fees.

Deadlines

There is a strict time limit of three months, less one day, in which an ET claim can be submitted, with the start date depending on the circumstances.

The most important point is that the time does not start to run when your grievance or appeal is lodged or concluded – it will have started much sooner, for instance, on the date you were told of the dismissal or the date of the issue/incident which gave rise to your grievance.

Unless you have had written confirmation from the solicitors that your application for legal assistance was received by head office 28 days or more before the deadline for filing the ET; that it has been accepted for consideration; and that they (Thompsons) are “acting on your behalf”, it is down to you to make sure that you file your ET claim and fees within the deadline.

Similarly, if, before any ET has been filed, the solicitors stop acting on your behalf because head office (in light of their advice) consider the case is not strong enough or worthwhile to pursue, it will be down to you to file the ET and pay fees if you wish to proceed irrespective of that decision/advice.

Fees

Any ET claim issued now requires payment of a fee. If FBU head office received your application for legal assistance 28 days before the ET deadline and the solicitors advised that your case had a reasonable prospect of success, the FBU will normally agree to “advance” the fee for you.

Before you reach the actual ET hearing, the solicitors will normally ask your employer to propose a settlement that includes compensation and the payment of your ET fee to reimburse the union.

The solicitors will be able to advise whether any offer is worth accepting. If they consider it to be inadequate, they will advise you to proceed to the hearing or wait until an acceptable offer is made.

If the employers refuse to include the fee or offer a lump sum to include the fee, you will be advised on the total sum offered less the fee, as that is what you would receive in compensation on accepting any such offer.

If your case proceeds to a hearing and succeeds, the solicitors will ask the ET to order the employers to reimburse your fee. The money will then be used to reimburse the union.

Read the guidance – and download the booklet – at www.fbu.org.uk/membership/legal-advice/employment-tribunals

KEY POINTS

- Employment tribunals (ETs) deal with many legal disputes in the workplace.
- Several rules in place are designed to prevent cases reaching ETs, and a grievance (not applicable where you have been dismissed), and an appeal should be lodged promptly. ACAS early conciliation will also be required.
- The FBU will support you through the internal processes and, for the ET, can offer legal assistance through our partnership with Thompsons.
- If your grievance and appeal fail or are not concluded within 28 days of the issue/incident that gave rise to the grievance (or in the case of dismissal, the dismissal hearing/decision), and you wish to proceed to an ET, the next stage is to apply for FBU legal assistance and ACAS early conciliation at the same time
- FBU head office must receive your application for legal assistance 28 days or more before the deadline by which you must file your ET, otherwise you will be responsible for filing your ET and paying the issue fee.
- There is a strict time limit of three months, less one day, in which an ET claim can be submitted. The ACAS early conciliation process stops time running for a short, specified period, but the rules are complex so this should not be relied on. Grievances and/or appeals do not extend the ET time limit which runs from the date of the issue/incident that gave rise to the grievance (or in the case of dismissal, the dismissal hearing/decision).
- ET claims now require fees. FBU will pay these subject to conditions designed to ensure we can recover them from employers.

The two-tier service – pay cuts for most but big rises for the few

While frontline firefighters have suffered a real-terms pay cut, chief fire officers' pay has shot up

A new report shows that pay for chief fire officers has rocketed over the past 10 years. Frontline firefighters, who this year again received just a 1% increase, have been left far behind.

The Labour Research Department pay report found that between 2003 and 2008 the increase of earnings for CFOs was 39.7% more than the increase in basic pay for firefighters over the past 10 years.

The report is based on government data on the pay that fire and rescue services award across the country.

No limit for CFO pay

Questions have been asked about the pay policy of fire and rescue services like Avon FRS that pays its CFO £130,000 a year.

Avon has a population of just over a million. Its CFO's pay is based on population band 3 in the Gold Book

(setting out employment conditions for principal fire officers) which establishes a minimum rate of pay for a position like this of £105,738.

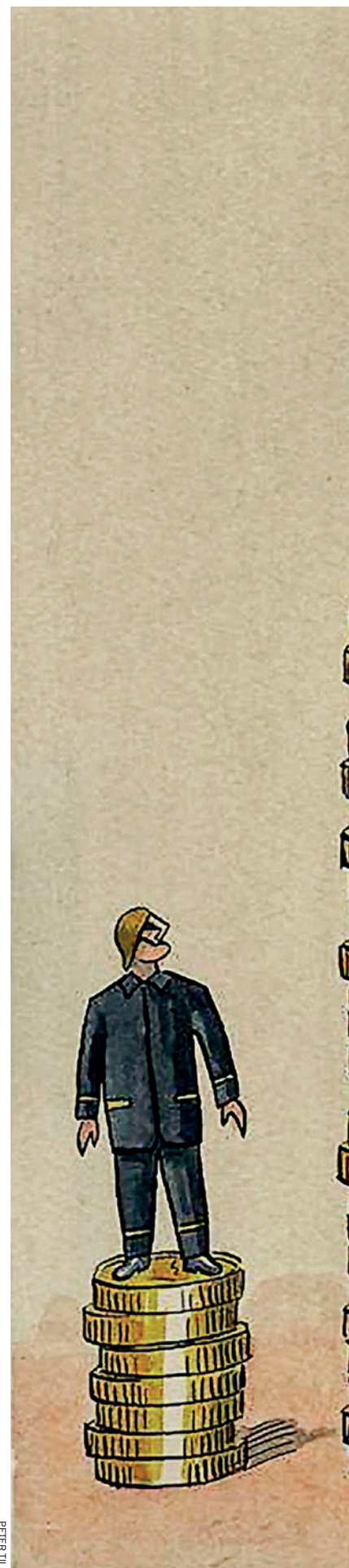
But the national agreement does not recommend an upper limit on CFO pay – in stark contrast to frontline firefighters, most of whom earn less than £30,000 a year.

CFO pay falls?

Even where CFO pay levels have fallen, this can be attributed, in many cases, to a change in personnel or to CFOs being re-engaged or entering flexible retirement on lower basic salaries, rather than being the result of an active approach to level out the pay difference between CFOs and firefighters.

Where pay scales are in use, as in West Yorkshire, a change in personnel could be expected to result in a lower salary. But “spot rates” are the norm in the national agreement and have been adopted by some authorities.

PETER TIL





Top-up pay

A freedom of information request was made to identify any pay additions, such as allowances or benefits, that would boost a CFO's basic pay.

At 17 fire authorities the pay additions, on top of the basic pay CFOs receive, amounted to more than £1,000.

Take the use of car allowances, which in Kent boosted the CFO's pay packet by £12,908, equivalent to 9% of the basic pay for the role.

In Cheshire, CFO pay increased in 2013 by £3,500 as a "reward recognition" payment was made.

In East Sussex, the CFO was given a management allowance of £13,337 in 2008 and £16,191 in 2013. In the same year East Sussex CFO pension contributions dropped to zero "due to re-engagement".

Cost of living

Concerns have been raised that some firefighters may find themselves in a cost of living crisis having suffered what is effectively a pay cut over the past four years.

After coming to power in 2010, the coalition government imposed a public sector pay freeze that meant firefighters' pay stayed the same for two years.

Since then, firefighters have only received an annual 1% increase that is far below the rate of inflation.

A study by the University of Loughborough's Centre for Research in Social Policy found that the cost of living is up by 27% over the last five years for a couple with two children.

Disgraceful

Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary, said: "The huge gap between CFOs' and firefighters' pay increases is disgraceful.

"Firefighters risk their lives on a daily basis and are recognised quite rightly as heroes by the public.

"However, like all public servants, firefighters have been subjected to a cruel pay policy which has left them worse off, while CFOs have been compensated by considerable pay increases over the past 10 years."

The FBU will be joining the TUC and other unions on a march through London on 18 October with the theme Britain Needs A Pay Rise.



Justice for Marlie

In the last issue of *Firefighter* the FBU launched a campaign for justice for firefighters Brian Wembridge and Geoff Wicker who were killed at Marlie Farm. Here we catch up with the campaign

The FBU's campaign for justice for the firefighters who died at Marlie Farm, has gone from strength to strength and continues to grow. Nearly 2,000 people have signed the petition demanding that East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (ESFRS) drop its appeal against the high court decision that it must pay compensation to the families of Brian Wembridge and Geoff Wicker.

Dozens of heartfelt messages were left on the campaign's Change.org petition page explaining why people feel so strongly about this campaign.

Ray Shields said he was "outraged by this injustice". Clive Beales, from Bexhill-on-Sea, said he knew both Brian and Geoff and attended the Marlie Farm fire in a support service role and thinks compensation should have been paid long ago.

East Sussex fire and rescue service reacted to the campaign by issuing a statement saying the legal process was being observed and that the "matter is in the hands of the legal teams for the insurers Zurich and the claimants".

Thunderclap

The union has recently employed a new campaign technique called "Thunderclap" to further highlight the Marlie Farm cause.

A thunderclap allows the same message to be shared on Facebook, Twitter and Tumblr at the same time



in order to get the subject "trending" – being recognised as of interest to a large number of social media users.

Trending in turn enables even more people pick up on the issue and exposes more of the public to the FBU's campaign.

The Marlie Farm social media Thunderclap reached over 194,347 people and went out midday on Wednesday 17 September.

Support

The union's campaign has received support from MPs Jon Cruddas, David Anderson, Grahame Morris, Mark Durkan and John McDonnell as well as comedians Tiernan Douieb and Tony

Jameson and musician Oliver Richards. Billy Hayes and Manuel Cortes, the respective general secretaries of the CWU and TSSA also supported the campaign.

Chilling defence

In the original court case, one line of defence from ESFRS was that it could not be held responsible for the deaths of any of its firefighters while they were on duty and tackling blazes.

Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary, said: "This is an absolutely chilling defence for any organisation to put forward, let alone a fire service that works with hundreds of firefighters daily.

"As a union we want justice for Brian and Geoff and to stop a tragedy like this from ever happening again.

"Firefighters put their lives at risk; but the service has a duty of care to make sure it is prepared for every situation, which was clearly not the case at Marlie Farm."

The campaign continues

As the campaign continues, the FBU is ratcheting up as much pressure on ESFRS as possible to drop the appeal and pay the compensation owed to Brian and Geoff's families.

✦ The petition is still

available to sign at www.justiceforfirefighters.co.uk

✦ If you would like to tweet about the campaign please use the hashtag #Justice4Firefighters

Farm firefighters

UPDATE

#Justice4firefighters
by Justice For Our Firefighters category: Cause

"East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service: Drop the appeal against liability and pay compensation owed #Justice4Firefighters"
<http://thndr.it/1pQPFEI>

 **Justice For Our Firefighters** **EMBED** </>

SUPPORTERS
292 of 250
116% of goal supported

SOCIAL REACH
194,347
People

TIME LEFT
Complete
Ends Sep 17, 12:00 PM BST

THUNDERCLAP CAMPAIGN

Nearly 200,000 social media users saw the FBU's appeal for justice as a result of the Thunderclap campaign

Justice for our Firefighters: Marlie Farm PRESS UPDATES SIGN THE PETITION



Brian Wembridge, 63 and Geoff Wicker, 49 died in the fire at Marlie Farm, Shortgate in 2006

Why are we still waiting for justice?

In 2006 Geoff Wicker and Brian Wembridge lost their lives tackling a fire at Marlie Farm. After investigation, this was found to be down to negligence on the part of the East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service. Despite a court ruling that compensation must be paid, the fire service is refusing and stopping the bereaved families recovering from this traumatic event.

Why are we still asking for this now eight years after the tragic event?

Sign the Petition

"We appeal to East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service to avoid prolonging the agony of bereaved families as well as injured firefighters and police officers by accepting this judgment and paying the appropriate compensation as soon as possible." We need justice for everyone affected by the disaster at Marlie Farm, we need the East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service to act with integrity, and we need your help to achieve it. This isn't acceptable. Please sign the petition.

JOIN OUR CAUSE
#JUSTICE4FIREFIGHTERS

SIGN THE PETITION

PETITION

The petition at justiceforfirefighters.co.uk

Edward JFT96 McGurk @godshomer · Sep 6
East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service: Drop the appeal against liability and pay compensation owed #Justice4Firefighters thndr.it/1pQPE3c
[View summary](#) [Reply](#) [Retweet](#) [Favorite](#) [More](#)

Fire Brigades Union @fbunational · Sep 4
To secure #Justice4firefighters we need you to help us raise the call! Join our Thunderclap and make some noise. bit.ly/JFF_thunderclap
[View summary](#) [Reply](#) [Retweet](#) [Favorite](#) [More](#)

Fire Brigades Union @fbunational · Sep 4
Help us get #Justice4firefighters by joining our Thunderclap. bit.ly/JFF_thunderclap Your voice will help us reach thousands.
[View summary](#) [Reply](#) [Retweet](#) [Favorite](#) [More](#)

Ian Lavery MP @IanLaveryMP · Sep 2
#Justice4Firefighters seek justice for fallen FBU comrades Geoff Wicker & Brian Wembridge please sign justiceforfirefighters.co.uk @fbunational
[Expand](#) [Reply](#) [Retweet](#) [Favorite](#) [More](#)

Ben Cooper @realrockmachine · Sep 2
Can you spare one minute to sign a petition or join a Thunderclap to get #Justice4firefighters? Please help bit.ly/JusticeForFire...
[Expand](#) [Reply](#) [Retweet](#) [Favorite](#) [More](#)

38 Degrees followed
Francesca Martinez @fchessmartinez · Sep 2
@EastSussexFRS is #justice4firefighters too much to ask for? I don't think so. Find out more justiceforfirefighters.co.uk
[Expand](#) [Reply](#) [Retweet](#) [Favorite](#) [More](#)

West Midlands FBU @WestMidFBU · Aug 28
I just supported #Justice4firefighters on @Thunderclap // @FBUnational thndr.it/1pQPFQq
[View summary](#) [Reply](#) [Retweet](#) [Favorite](#) [More](#)

Leslie Manasseh followed
Fire Brigades Union @fbunational · Aug 28
Why won't @EastSussexFRS pay compensation to bereaved families? Help us get #Justice4firefighters >> bit.ly/MarlieFarmPet...
[View summary](#) [Reply](#) [Retweet](#) [Favorite](#) [More](#)

Change.org
East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service: Drop the appeal against liability...
Geoff Wicker and Brian Wembridge lost their lives tackling a fire at Marlie Farm, partly due to the negligence of East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service...


TWITTER

Thousands responded

ALCOHOL

Share your views on the problem

Your feedback can help charity make the case for a healthier relationship with alcohol

Alcohol Concern

Every year, alcohol-related incidents take up thousands of hours of the emergency services' time and lead to hundreds of assaults on frontline staff. The charity Alcohol Concern is working with trade unions and employers to look for solutions

Since the earliest times, visitors to these islands have noted one thing about the British – we like a drink. Around 90% of adults in the UK say they drink alcohol, and more than half of us who drink admit we drink too much. The results of our national habit are plain to see. Sometimes it's just a sore head in the morning; sometimes it's more serious.

Alcohol is a factor in around a third of house fire deaths and the reasons are not too hard to fathom. When a drowsy drinker decides to cook up a late-night snack, or have one last cigarette before bed, the consequences can be deadly. Alcohol plays a big part in deliberate fire starting too, with studies showing as many as 70% of arsonists are drunk when they spark the blaze.

Alcohol misuse also accounts for a substantial slice of fire and rescue work on the roads – in 2012 there were more than 6,600 drink-related road traffic incidents in the UK, leading to 9,700 injuries and

230 deaths.

Frontline staff know well enough what this means in terms of time spent managing situations that often could have been avoided and intoxicated people who can range from helpless, through unhelpful to aggressive.

Even when alcohol is not the cause of an incident, it can make dealing with it problematic.

As the FBU's *Easy Targets* report noted in 2008, alcohol is a component of much "recreational violence" against fire crews.

Sadly, this is not exceptional. Earlier this year, the N Ireland Ambulance Service reported an average of five attacks on their crews each week.

As John McPoland of the service commented: "What we found is that alcohol and drug abuse is a common factor. People just don't realise that they are attacking those people who are there to help them."

For all these reasons, Alcohol Concern were at this year's Emergency Services Show in Birmingham in September with UNISON – the union representing paramedics and many other NHS staff – to try to find out more about the problem and possible solutions.

Our search for information and ideas is continuing and we invite FBU members to join the debate. We would like to know about the challenges you face as a result of the overuse of alcohol by the public you are

working to protect and what you think needs to be done about it.

Maybe you would like to see more training for staff or better procedures. Or maybe you think we need action to tackle the root causes of the problem – by changing the way alcohol is sold and consumed. Either way, we would like to hear from you.

Your feedback can help us make the case for a healthier relationship with alcohol and safer homes and streets for all of us. To get involved, to share your views or to find out more, please contact Alcohol Concern's director for Wales Andrew Misell at Alcohol Concern: amisell@alcoholconcern.org.uk ■ www.alcoholconcern.org.uk



PA PHOTOS

Legal Beagle

Thompsons legal services for FBU members

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

Q How have Thompsons helped FBU members and their families injured in accidents?

A In 2013 Thompsons recovered £3.35m in compensation for FBU members and members of their families injured in accidents both at and away from work.

Over £1m was recovered in a variety of cases but £2.2m of the total was compensation secured for Steven Morris, who suffered catastrophic burns to over 50% of his body while searching for a child and her grandmother trapped in a burning building in Bolton.

While Steven and his colleagues were in the building, there was an explosion, thought to have been caused by a gas pipe rupturing. Steven was engulfed in flames but still managed to get down the stairs and out of the house.

Thompsons brought a claim against Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue for a number of serious failures which led to Steven's injuries and negotiated the settlement, thought to be the largest ever for a UK firefighter.

Q What high profile cases affecting FBU members has Thompsons been involved in over the last year?

A This year, Thompsons have continued the fight for justice for members who were killed or injured at Marlie Farm, East Sussex. Members will be aware of the tragic events of 3 December 2006,

when a fire at a fireworks factory reached a shipping container loaded with fireworks causing an explosion that killed two firefighters and injured many others.

Claims were brought on behalf of firefighters injured in the explosions and on behalf of the two widows. Judgment in favour of the claimants was given in July 2013 but East Sussex fire and rescue service has chosen to prolong the suffering of the bereaved families and the injured by appealing against that decision. Thompsons continue to work to defeat the appeal.

This year, Thompsons have also secured settlements for the families of the two

Southampton firefighters killed in the Shirley Towers high rise fire of April 2010.

Q How has Thompsons helped FBU members affected by asbestos related diseases?

A Sadly the consequences of exposure to asbestos continue to play havoc amongst FBU members. Cases this year have included one for the family of a firefighter who developed the fatal asbestos-related disease mesothelioma after exposure to asbestos during his employment at Pilgrim Street Fire Station in Newcastle between 1960 and 1986.

Thompsons' industrial disease experts gathered crucial witness statements from former firefighters who described asbestos exposure from attending fires in local shipyards, factories and houses. This evidence was crucial in linking the member's mesothelioma to his time working at the station.

Q What am I entitled to as an FBU member and how can I access the legal service?

A As an FBU member, you have access to free legal advice and representation on:

- Personal injuries at work, including assaults
- Personal injuries away from work
- Road traffic accident injuries
- Industrial diseases or illness
- Criminal law representation for work-related matters
- Will writing
- 30 minutes' free telephone advice for any non-work issue
- Employment cover (accessed through your FBU region).

In addition, members of your family are entitled to free cover for:

- Personal injuries away from work
- Holiday injuries
- Road traffic accident injuries
- Special terms for clinical negligence cases
- Reduced rates for conveyancing and wills.

To access the legal service, contact your FBU representative in the first instance or call 0808 100 6061 for more information.



SATOSHI KAMBAYASHI

'If you get stuck up there, the mountain rescue has to come out'

Four Cambridge firefighters 'raced the sun' and raised £2,000 for a children's charity



When the cycle track went 'off road' for 10k Cameron was worried the wheels of his bike might buckle



The wind was more than 30 miles an hour at the summit of Helvellyn

Firefighters are used to a challenge or two at work – it's an unwritten part of the job spec. Some even choose to seek them out away from work – and they often involve feats of physical endurance, which may well help raise much-needed funds for good causes.

Take the Cambridge firefighters who faced three back to back challenges on a day off recently – "racing against the sun" in the Lake District, raising £2,000 for the children's charity Action Medical Research.

The gruelling triathlon-style event involved cycling 80k, then hiking to the top of Helvellyn, England's second highest mountain, before ending the day kayaking 3k on Thirlmere.

There was, of course, no time for a leisurely picnic to take in the view. Flapjacks, glucose gels and energy shots, stashed away in rucksacks and raided as and when, had to suffice – along with lots and lots of water.

Cameron Matthews, Cambridgeshire FBU brigade secretary, was happy to report that the four-strong firefighter team from the city centre station completed all three challenges before sundown, "albeit with sore legs and exhausted bodies".

As a team member himself, Cameron should know. He experienced the mix of elation and exhaustion that comes from completing an endurance challenge or three within the allotted deadline. And he was certainly more than ready for a bit of a lie down after sunset that night.

Team bonding

Cambridge fire station colleagues Matt House, Leon Collins and Jo Shippey, completed the team – one of 85 taking part in the Lake District fundraiser. They even bumped into another firefighter taking part in the challenge in a mixed team from Cheshire – but there wasn't much time to chat.

Matt, Cameron and Leon are on the same watch – which must have helped with team bonding. Jo, who is on a different watch, is a respected colleague and sportswoman.

Cambridge firefighters are no slouches when it comes to physical exertion for charity – they have been known to pull a fire engine around the city's streets to raise funds, not to mention collecting clothes to recycle.

All frontline firefighters have to be physically fit.



Cameron Matthews (right) with (l to r) Matt House, Jo Shippey and Leon Collins



The Cambridge team display their medals



But the “race the sun” team worked on their fitness to prepare for the big day, training for months with gym sessions and cycle rides.

Cambridge is famously flat – a world away from the hilly and rugged terrain up in the lakes. It looked “even flatter” when they got back from Helvellyn, says Cameron, fresh images of clambering up a mountain and more seared into his memory.

There were a few slightly scary moments, Cameron recalls. At one stage, when the cycle track went “off road” for 10k, he was “a bit worried” the wheels of his bike might buckle. They didn’t.

The hike up Helvellyn proved the most exhausting part of the day. The wind was getting up as the team reached the top, reaching 30 miles an hour or more. The journey up had been much more than a bracing ramble and involved a spot of rudimentary climbing. “We knew that if you get stuck up there the mountain rescue has to come out,” Cameron says. And “Cambridge firefighters stranded on Helvellyn” wouldn’t have looked good back home; frontline emergency workers get rescued. But again, it didn’t happen. The team even ran down the mountain after they’d reached the top, racing against the sun.

It was on the last leg of the day’s triple challenge that the Cambridge firefighters really showed their skills: the team came joint first in the kayaking event on Thirlmere. Fire and rescue service “on water” training could well have helped. Team members didn’t learn they

had come joint first immediately. It wasn’t a rush to the finish line, but judged against the clock over 3k. The race is against the sun, not other teams. But it was still a good feeling to end up unbeaten on the water.

By rising to the challenge and “beating the sun” the Cambridge firefighters unlocked sponsorship money already pledged – including generous contributions from colleagues back at the station. £2,000 has been raised for children’s charity Action Medical Research, the event organisers. Any extra cash raised by the Cambridge team will go to The Fire Fighters Charity.

Sense of achievement

Completing the three challenges had left team members with “a great sense of achievement”, said Cameron. It was also good to raise “a fantastic amount of money for a great cause”.

Action Medical Research does important frontline research. It offers hope to the thousands of families who are dealing with the trauma of a baby born too early, striving to support a child affected by disability, or facing the challenge of caring for a child with a rare and devastating disease for which there is no cure.

By successfully racing the sun, Team Cambridge Firefighters – and their supporters – have boosted the charity’s funds by £2,000, and all money still to be collected will go to The Fire Fighters Charity. Charity fundraising can prove addictive. Now, when’s the next fire engine pull around the streets of Cambridge?

Prize quiz



Win two tickets to see Sam Smith at the Manchester O2 Apollo on 20 March 2015

HOW TO ENTER

To win two tickets to see Sam Smith at the Manchester O2 Apollo, please send your answers by 31 October 2014 on a postcard to: Prize Competition (October 2014), FBU Head Office, Bradley House, 68 Coombe Road, Kingston upon Thames, KT2 7AE. Please include your name, address and membership number. The winner will be selected at random from all correct entries.

1 Whose 90s tour was called 'The Wildest Dreams Tour' playing to around 3 million people in Europe and the US?

- A Joni Mitchell
- B Tina Turner
- C Cyndi Lauper
- D Alison Moyet

2 Whose 360 Degree Tour was dubbed the 'World's largest tour ever'?

- A The Rolling Stones
- B U2
- C Oasis
- D Coldplay



4 Sam Smith has teamed up with which clothes designer for his current tour?

- A Gucci
- B Fiorucci
- C Paul Smith
- D Calvin Klein

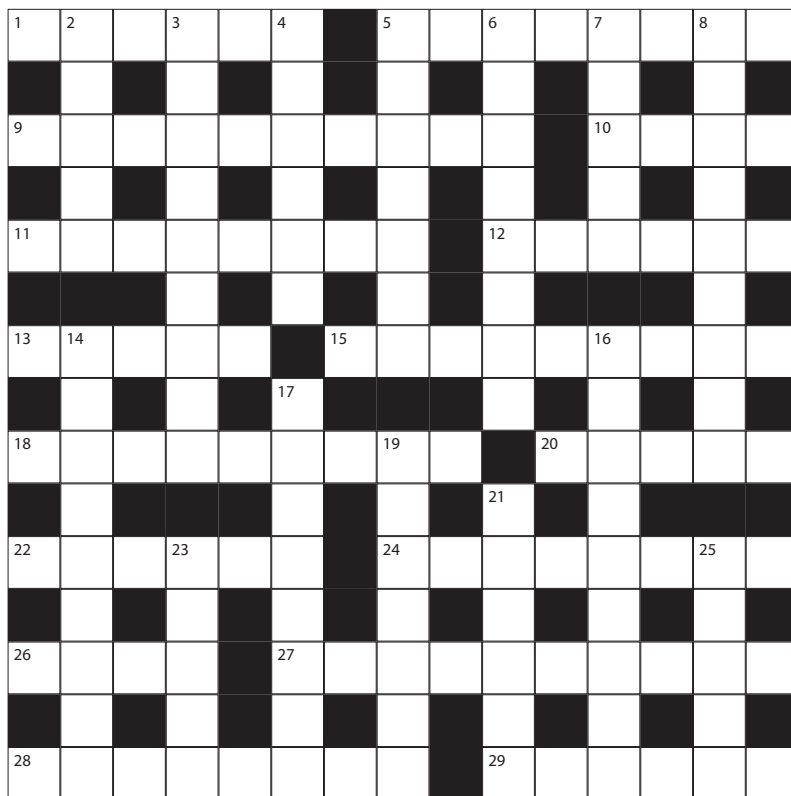
5 Name the singer who has accompanied the FBU's Ring of Fire Tour throughout?

- A Richard Olivers
- B Oliver Richards
- C Joe MacVeigh
- D Daniel Celardi



3 Michael Jackson's worldwide HIStory Tour visited which of the following islands in his year-long 82 stop tour?

- A Bora Bora
- B Isle of Wight
- C Hawaii
- D Sardegna



CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Dam-building aquatic mammal (6)
- 5 Mailed memento (8)
- 9 FBU road-show - as advertised by Johnny Cash? (4,2,4)
- 10 Supporting structure for bridge - or foot (4)
- 11 Devilishly determined! (4-4)
- 12 Slight indent on cheek, chin or golf ball (6)
- 13 Aroma, perfume (5)
- 15 Practical joker (9)
- 18 Equine? You can bet on it! (9)
- 20 Malice, ill-will (5)
- 22 Willie, Horatio - or Mandela (6)
- 24 What Britain needs, according to 18 October TUC demo (1,3,4)
- 26 Rock lying beneath the sea's surface, or a simple knot (4)
- 27 Such fires can be caused by overloading sockets (10)
- 28 Foot soldiers (8)
- 29 Fraction of crude oil named after the German inventor of this type of engine (6)

DOWN

- 2 Banish(ment) (5)
- 3 Self-appointed enforcer without legal authority (9)
- 4 Roof beam (6)
- 5 Decorator - of walls or canvases (7)
- 6 Major cause of RTAs (8)
- 7 Small ornament worn on bracelet etc (5)
- 8 Remember (9)
- 14 Colour-changing creature (9)
- 16 Oversee (9)
- 17 Least old (8)
- 19 System in which humans are traded (7)
- 21 Desired - by the police? (6)
- 23 Bulgarian capital (5)
- 25 Look unblinkingly (5)

Last issue's answers and winners



Crossword solution August/September

August/September quiz answers

- 1 - A Elsa
- 2 - C Trumpet
- 3 - C Zulu
- 4 - D Carmen
- 5 - A Ellie Goulding

Winner of July quiz

Iain MacDonald, Orkney

Station Cat Retirement, roles, running and a royal

Order of the boot: London Fire Brigade is to stop providing Silver Shadow trainers to help its firefighters keep fit



No longer footing the bill

 London firefighters are bidding a sad farewell to their Hi-Tec Silver Shadows. These are the trainers that LFB provided, along with jogging bottoms, for training in the gym. The trainers are, naturally, a victim of austerity.

Presumably the London Fire Brigade reckons that, if firefighters are going to have to work into their dotage to get their pensions, keeping them fit is a lost battle anyway.

It begins at home

 The Fire Fighters Charity's sad lapse of judgement – it lavished praise on outgoing fire minister Brandon Lewis as FBU members were taking industrial action – has been forgiven. The charity's two tweets about what a good chap Mr Lewis is have been deleted and it has apologised. The action was against the minister's attacks on fire-fighters' pensions. If Mr Lewis were to get his way the charity's resources would come under new strain.

What a shower!

 Of course the world knows that Prince Harry visited firefighters in Valparaíso (above), during his three-day visit to Chile in June. But no newspaper seems to have reported that, when demonstrating their equipment to the prince, they turned their hoses on the



British press pack which was following the Prince around the country. Your Cat, however, follows Valentine Low of *The Times* on Twitter, so she knows. And now you know.

Oh, Ron. Is this the last farewell?

 London's firefighters are losing their commissioner – or are they? Ron Dobson has said he intends to retire in March next year.

But we've been here before. In 2011 he retired from his £200,000-a-year post so as to get his hands on an estimated £700,000 lump sum from his pension fund – and came back to his old job. So is he really going this time? Your Cat will be following events closely.

Blair backs the Yes side

 While every other political grandee in Britain went to Scotland to talk about the

referendum, Tony Blair offered his advice from the Ukraine.

What's he doing there? We know he's on the payroll of the brutal dictators who govern Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, but Ukraine?

Your Cat was curious, and asked his office. They replied: "He was addressing the Yes conference in Yalta." Blair's office didn't spell out what Yes is – they never give any information if they can help it – but your cat can tell you: it's the Yalta European Strategy meeting, an annual event set up by one of Blair's fabulously wealthy chums, the Ukrainian oligarch Victor Pinchuk, who has been promoting Ukraine's membership of the EU, which helped pave the way for the country's current troubles.

He's the sort of man who attracts New Labour folk – Stephen Byers is a director of Pinchuk's EU company. Remember Byers?

He was the former New Labour cabinet minister whose

political career ended when he was caught trying to sell influence. "Think of me as a cab for hire," he told a journalist posing as a lobbyist. Pinchuk is a steel magnate worth \$4.2 billion, which he made after marrying the daughter of Leonid Kuchma, Ukraine's former president.

Blair once toured his factory and made a toe-curlingly grovelling speech afterwards about how wonderful it was, for which he is thought to have been paid a six figure sum.

Where's the fire?

 Your Cat is pleased to see a website designed to recruit firefighters at www.fireservice.co.uk, but a little puzzled at a section which reads:

"The 4 main roles of a fire-fighter are:

- To prevent fire and accidents from occurring in the first place.
- Educating the community by visiting schools, community centres and people in their own homes.
- Advising people about planning escape routes within their own homes in case of a fire.
- Actively seeking to understand and to value diverse individuals and groups."

Your cat feels there's something missing, but she can't quite put her paw on what it is.

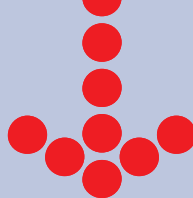
The 4 main roles of a firefighter are:

- To prevent fire and accidents from occurring in the first place.
- Educating the community by visiting schools, community centres and people in their own homes
- Advising people about planning escape routes within their own homes in case of a fire.
- Actively seeking to understand and to value diverse individuals and groups.

Training and Development



25-year badges



Margaret Woods (r), red watch, Northumberland control, receives her 25-year badge from FBU rep Caroline Sanderson



Dave Stansfield (l), and Tony Pascall (r), red watch, Painshill, Surrey, receive their 25-year badges from branch rep Tom Evans with colleagues Dave Bowers and Richard Stedman



Stuart Webber (l), white watch, Painshill, Surrey, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Tom Evans with colleagues (l to r) Sean Brewster, Adam Walsh, Richard Gatward and Alan Daly



Matt Stewart (r), York, North Yorkshire, receives his 25-year badge from divisional chair Paul Warnock



Dave Houseman (l), York, North Yorkshire, receives his 25-year badge from divisional chair Paul Warnock



Steve Hagar (r), High Handenhold, Durham, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Tony Curry



Graham Gratton (l), Eastwood, Nottinghamshire, receives his 25-year badge from regional retained rep Paul Revill



Martin Caress (l) Eastwood, Nottinghamshire, receives his 25-year badge from regional retained rep Paul Revill



Kelvin Steele (l), operations support, West Yorkshire, receives his 25-year badge from Richard Hawley



Keith Jenkins (l), receives his 25-year badge from Mid and West Wales regional official Roger Curran



Pete Fosh (r), Bath, Avon, receives his 25-year badge from South West regional chair Kevin Herniman on the picket line



Martin Hurley (r), Bath, Avon, receives his 25-year badge from regional chair Kevin Herniman on the picket line



Jonathan Roberts (l), red watch, Maindee, South Wales, receives his 25-year badge from health and safety rep Simon Fleming with crew members (l-r) Shaun Buck, Paul Simmons, Gersh Price, Andy Colecliffe, Gareth Evans and Philip Price.

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

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
07894 613402, gary.mitchell@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

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 Kent, Surrey, Sussex

Unit 11, Hunns Mere Way,
Woodingdean, Brighton, BN2 6AH
01273 309762, 11rs@fbu.org.uk

REGION 12 Bucks, Berks, Hants, Oxon, Isle of Wight

Temporary address:
Unit 3a, Broughton Grounds Lane,
Newport Pagnell MK16 0HZ
01296 482297, 12rs@fbu.org.uk

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