



FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE MATTERS

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FIREFIGHTER JOBS STILL BEING CUT AFTER THE GRENFELL TOWER FIRE

Further cuts to vital firefighter jobs are still being forced through despite the tragedy of the Grenfell Tower fire, according to new figures obtained by the Fire Brigades Union (FBU).

Firefighters are responsible for rapid deployment to fires, floods, terrorist incidents, civil disturbances, industrial explosions, train accidents and other emergencies across the UK.

Last year, over **500** frontline firefighter jobs were lost during another dreadful year of cuts in the recent history of the modern fire and rescue service.

500 MORE JOBS CUTS

Over 300 jobs lost last year were wholetime (full-time) firefighter posts, with fire and rescue services such as Scotland, London, Tyne and Wear, and West Yorkshire hit. However brigades such as Mid and West Wales, Cleveland, Derbyshire, Staffordshire, Hampshire and Surrey lost proportionately high numbers of wholetime firefighters.

Retained firefighter numbers fell in a number of brigades, notably Merseyside, Greater Manchester, South Yorkshire and West Sussex. Control jobs rose slightly, after many years of drastic cuts.

Firefighter jobs were cut in most parts of England, and in Scotland. Wales overall was similar to the previous year, although this differed across brigades. Northern Ireland increased its wholetime firefighter establishment. This is the eighth successive year that firefighter numbers have been slashed across the UK.

FIREFIGHTER JOBS SINCE 2010

Since the Tory-led governments came into office in 2010, almost **12,000** frontline firefighter jobs have been cut. This is now one-in-five (**20%**) of the total firefighting force over this period. More than one thousand firefighter jobs have been cut in Scotland since 2010. In Wales nearly 300 jobs have gone, while Northern Ireland has lost over a hundred.

More than 8,000 of these cuts are to wholetime firefighters, while more than 3,000 retained firefighters have also been cut. More than a quarter of control staff, who take the emergency calls and mobilise fire crews, have been lost. Every brigade has suffered – metropolitan, combined and county services – in all parts of the UK and under all devolved administrations, though not to the same degree.

WHY FIREFIGHTER JOB CUTS MATTER

Firefighters provide an all-hazards emergency service, putting themselves on the line to rescue people in their hour of need. Fewer firefighters means increased risks to the public who pay for the service and are entitled to professional help when they need it. Response times have slowed, inevitably putting communities at risk when there are multiple incidents.

Between 2010 and 2015, over 30% of central funding to fire and rescue services was cut, according to the National Audit Office. Further cuts of 20% to 2020 have been set out in the Local Government Settlement. This was confirmed earlier this year, despite the Grenfell Tower fire. These cuts cannot continue without putting people's lives in jeopardy.

TABLE: FIREFIGHTER JOB CUTS, 2010-18 AND 2017-18

Fire and Rescue Service	Firefighters change 2010 to 2018	Firefighters change 2010 to 2018 (%)	Firefighters change 2017 to 2018	Firefighters change 2017 to 2018 (%)
Scotland	-1,123	-15%	-99	-1%
Northern Ireland	-143	-7%	19	1%
Mid and West Wales	-108	-9%	-78	-7%
North Wales	-71	-9%	41	6%
South Wales	-88	-6%	34	3%
Wales	-267	-8%	-3	0%
Cleveland	-176	-28%	-17	-4%
Durham	-68	-12%	6	1%
Northumberland	-115	-27%	-1	0%
Tyne & Wear	-285	-30%	-33	-5%
Humberside	-208	-20%	6	1%
North Yorkshire	-92	-12%	6	1%
South Yorkshire	-280	-30%	-19	-3%
West Yorkshire	-572	-33%	-32	-3%
Cheshire	-75	-10%	-5	-1%
Cumbria	-169	-23%	6	1%
Greater Manchester	-700	-35%	-9	-1%
Lancashire	-314	-24%	22	2%
Merseyside	-386	-32%	-184	-18%
North West Fire Control	64	N/A	2	3%
Derbyshire	-81	-10%	-20	-3%
Leicestershire	-211	-27%	6	1%
Lincolnshire	-143	-19%	-36	-6%
Northamptonshire	-124	-22%	-26	-5%
Nottinghamshire	-233	-24%	-3	0%
Hereford & Worcester	-90	-12%	-10	-2%
Shropshire	-39	-7%	0	0%
Staffordshire	-262	-28%	-39	-6%
Warwickshire	-50	-11%	20	5%
West Midlands	-455	-24%	5	0%
Bedfordshire	-57	-11%	-1	0%
Cambridgeshire	-149	-21%	0	0%
Essex	-260	-18%	17	1%
Hertfordshire	-120	-14%	1	0%
Norfolk	-98	-11%	22	3%
Suffolk	-167	-21%	4	1%
London	-1,334	-22%	-76	-2%
Berkshire	-84	-15%	19	4%
Buckinghamshire	-249	-40%	16	4%
East Sussex	-150	-20%	-7	-1%
Hampshire	-170	-11%	-21	-1%
Isle of Wight	-55	-25%	-6	-4%
Kent	-499	-30%	6	1%
Oxfordshire	-90	-14%	12	2%
Surrey	-131	-17%	-15	-2%
West Sussex	-305	-37%	-85	-14%
Avon	-215	-22%	1	0%
Cornwall	77	12%	19	3%
Devon & Somerset	-490	-24%	-24	-2%
Dorset and Wiltshire	-235	-18%	7	1%
Gloucestershire	-97	-19%	9	2%
England	-9,942	-22%	-457	-1%
UK	-11,854	-20%	-540	-1%

Source: FBU Freedom of Information requests April-June 2017. These are provisional headcount figures on 31 March each year.

Note: Some wholetime firefighters also work a retained contract, leading to some double counting in the figures provided by fire and rescue services.