

Firefighter

The magazine of the Fire Brigades Union

Where's the resilience?

What happens when
fire cover relies on luck
– and it runs out

See p8

FIGHTING FOR
WORKERS
See p10

GAZA'S FIRST
RESPONDERS
See p12

TAKING ON
FOOTBALL'S OWNERS
See p16

October-November 2025



www.fbu.org.uk

Spring and summer this year were both record-breaking. Droughts and high temperatures created the perfect conditions for wildfires. Meanwhile, austerity has undermined the ability of the fire service to respond and a lack of national standards means that it's pot luck how good your local fire cover will be.

We dedicate our front page to the crisis of resilience that was laid bare this summer. As we show on page 8, massive fires at Holt Heath in Dorset and Langdale Moor in North Yorkshire drew in crews from across the UK.

Why are FBU members being sent hundreds of miles across the UK to fight fires? The answer is simple: cuts. We have lost one in five firefighter jobs since 2010, and this year the Labour government has imposed yet another real terms cut.

Our message to the government is clear – you must invest in our service to keep the public safe.

Why are FBU members being sent hundreds of miles across the UK to fight fires? The answer is simple: cuts



Steve Wright

Where is the resilience?

POLITICAL FIGHT

This September, we took our message direct to the politicians. At Labour Party conference this year we helped forced a debate on funding for public services. Delegates voted for a motion, put forward by the FBU and other unions, which called on the government tax the rich to fund an emergency increase of 5,000 firefighters as a first step to restoring numbers. We will fight for that motion to be implemented.

Find out more about what we did at Labour and TUC conferences on page 10.

PAY

At a recent meeting of the National Joint Council, the FBU and fire service employers continued discussions that should end the flat pay structure and postcode lottery that was established after the 2002-3 pay dispute, which both parties agree is inadequate. Read page 7 for more information.

SYNAGOGUE ATTACKS

The terrorist attack at Heaton Park Synagogue in Manchester on 2 October shocked the country. The FBU sends its condolences and thoughts to all those affected. We are proud of the role our members played on the day in saving lives, and on page 4 we set out the importance of the Marauding Terrorist Attack (MTA) agreement with the FBU.

GAZA

On pages 12–15, we reprint a grim, and insightful, piece of reporting on the bravery and plight of our colleagues in Gaza. Over two years of hell, firefighters have tried their best to keep their communities safe. Many have been killed, and lost those closest to them. The FBU will continue to demand justice and an end to the killing.

PHOTO COMPETITION

Congratulations to winner Paul Young, and runners up Gordon Curran and Hannah Tyler, in this year's FBU photo competition. You can read about their work on page 18, and get your hands on it in the 2026 FBU calendar. You can pre-order your calendar today – just visit the FBU Shop at shop.fbu.org.uk



It's time to end the flat pay structure and postcode lottery established more than 20 years ago



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Firefighter

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NEWS

FRENCH STRIKES

A million walk out including firefighters



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PAY NEGOTIATIONS

The current state of the pay talks



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MANCHESTER ATTACK



Firefighters responded alongside paramedics to the terrorist attack on a synagogue

ALAMY

Firefighters assist at scene of terrorist attack

Firefighters were mobilised in response to the terrorist attack on a synagogue in Manchester, which took place on the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur on 2 October.

Crews from Manchester Central and Agecroft fire stations were en route to an automatic fire alarm when they came across what they believed to be a road traffic collision with one casualty on the floor. They quickly found themselves responding to a terrorist attack.

An attacker drove a car into members of the Heaton Park Hebrew Congregation synagogue in Crumpsall, and stabbed Melvin Cravitz, 66,

to death before being shot by police. The attacker appeared to be wearing an explosive device, which was later found to be unviable.

Adrian Daulby, 53, also died in the attack as a result of police gunfire as firearms officers shot the attacker.

CRUCIAL ROLE

Steve Wright, Fire Brigades Union general secretary, sent the union's "deepest condolences to the families and friends of those murdered in this appalling attack. Our thoughts are with them, those injured, and with the wider Jewish community."

Firefighters played a crucial role in delivering

trauma care to victims of the attack, and more were mobilised alongside the North West Ambulance Service.

In Greater Manchester and London, the fire service has negotiated marauding terrorist attack (MTA) cover with the FBU, with firefighters given special training and equipment for incidents such as this.

Andy Fox-Hewitt, FBU executive council member for the North West, said: "In total, 11 fire appliances and approximately 60 firefighters were mobilised to the scene of this horrific attack. I want to pay tribute to the bravery of our members who responded

and saved lives."

Steve Wright added: "Without a doubt, firefighters saved lives on 2 October. This was only possible due to a collective agreement on Marauding Terrorist Attacks (MTA).

CALL FOR AGREEMENT

"Currently, only London and Manchester have signed up for this type of agreement. Had this type of heinous attack happened anywhere else in the UK, firefighters would not have been able to respond in the same way.

"The FBU is proud of the role our members played, and we are keen to agree MTA arrangements at a UK-wide level."



Fight against fire service cuts ramps up

FBU members in Scotland are ramping up the fight against Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) proposals to cut the service across the country. A public consultation on the cuts has now closed, having received 3,500 responses in 12 weeks to the 23 options for cuts.

The SFRS board is scheduled to discuss the proposals at a meeting on 18 December, ahead of the Scottish government's budget announcement in January.

More than 70 parliamentary questions have been raised in Holyrood, and FBU members have held over 100 direct engagements with politicians across all levels of local and national politics in Scotland and the UK.

As a result of members' lobbying, the proposals have been regularly debated in Scottish parliament.

Katy Clark, Labour MSP for West Scotland Region, secured a chamber debate on Community Safety on 1 October.

However, SNP MSPs voted for what FBU Scotland described as a "wrecking amendment", removing reference to reduced firefighter numbers and the increased risk for communities.

This included some politicians who had pledged public support for the campaign, described as "nauseating hypocrisy" by Colin Brown, FBU executive council member for Scotland.

Firefighters are planning to continue lobbying alongside local organising, and will be gathering in large numbers at the "Scotland Demands Better" march and rally outside the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh on 25 October.

HAMPSHIRE AND ISLE OF WIGHT

Cuts pushed through in Hampshire and Isle of Wight despite agreed delay

Planned cuts to Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service have been implemented by the former chief fire officer, despite the fire authority voting to delay the decision in late August.

Chief Fire Officer Neil Odin, who stepped down from his role in September, confirmed in a video message to staff that the £1.6 million in frontline cuts will go ahead. The fire authority had voted to pause the decision following widespread concern from firefighters and the public about the potential risks to safety.

The service has already faced criticism for failing to meet its own emergency response standards in

recent inspections.

Campaigners had urged the service to draw on its £23.9 million reserves and press the government for improved funding. Firefighters are continuing to lobby MPs in the area to put pressure on ministers to plug the gap with central government funding.

Mark Chapman, FBU Southern Regional Secretary, said:

"Senior management's decision to force through these cuts is a dereliction of duty. Their responsibility is to put public safety first and preserve vital resources.

"The government must now step in and provide the funding urgently needed."



Sounding Off

Wear a white ribbon

Ben Selby explains how men in the fire and rescue service can take part in White Ribbon Day this year

The White Ribbon movement began in 1991, founded by a group of men who sought to challenge and prevent violence against women and girls.

Statistics on gender-based violence are still shocking today. TUC research has found that 3 in 5 women have experienced sexual harassment, bullying or verbal abuse in the workplace.

And government figures show that around 1 in 8 women were victims of sexual assault, domestic abuse or stalking in the last year.

Most women who experience this violence do so at the hands of a man they know.

This epidemic of violence is the product of a culture that we can – and must – challenge. It's systemic across our society. But firefighters have an important, and unique, role to play in our communities.

There are many positive role models on the frontline, treating others with dignity, respect and upholding equality every day. In the fire service, our jobs and lives rely on working as highly communicative teams. But there can be a flip side, where pressure to fit in can make it hard to speak out.

As men, it is in our power to change stereotypes of masculinity, which can trap men in isolation and aggression.

We know that fire service leaders have overseen cultures of fear and silence. To tackle management failings, we must be unified in standing with all of our sisters in the service.

By challenging violence against women in all its forms, we will build a better workplace, union, and society.

The FBU now has a steering group of male senior officials driving the union's work on this, guided by the National Women's Committee.

Wear a white ribbon and show your opposition to male violence against women on November 25.

FRANCE



ALAMY

CGT union placards call for higher salaries and pensions

Nationwide anti-austerity strikes in France

French unions, including public sector unions representing firefighters, have organised nationwide strikes against government austerity this autumn: demanding a tax on the super-rich to fund services.

Up to one million demonstrators took part in a strike across France on 18 September. And protesters took to the streets of more than 200 towns and cities across France on 2 October, calling for an end to government cuts.

The Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT) is one of the largest unions in France and represents many firefighters alongside workers from across the public sector. “We need to... end for good all the sacrifices being

demanding of workers that were set out in the (last) budget proposal,” CGT secretary general Sophie Binet told BFM TV.

The European Trade Union Confederation found that France had lost over 5,000 firefighters to cuts between 2021–2022.

Trade unions are also demanding a suspension of changes to pensions, which increased the age of retirement and was pushed through the French parliament in 2023.

The French prime minister, Sébastien Lecornu, resigned in October following a month of turmoil. President Emmanuel Macron continues to face heavy criticism for proposing further cuts.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

Bucks faces new cutbacks threat

Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service is facing the loss of eight fire engines and two fire stations under new proposals put forward by the local fire authority.

The Liberal Democrat-run authority is considering two options, both of which would see fire engines in the county reduced from 30 to 22. A fire authority meeting is scheduled for mid-November, where a public consultation could be approved.

Buckinghamshire has already faced some of the worst cuts in the country, with the service losing over a third of its firefighters between 2010 and 2024.

The Fire Brigades Union warns that any further cuts would seriously undermine public safety and says it is time to switch focus from managing decline to rebuilding and growing the service.

“Instead of looking for more ways to reduce resources, we need a new focus: securing the investment that allows us to rebuild, recruit and retain firefighters,” said Mitch Wallace, FBU brigade secretary for Buckinghamshire.

“This is especially critical in harder-to-staff areas, where crewing shortages put lives at risk.”

In brief

FBU SURVEY INTO RACISM

The FBU is carrying out an independent review examining the potential existence of racism within the union.

The review is led by NIANRO Consulting. As the voice of firefighters, the FBU is keen to ensure that the experiences and perspectives of firefighters on the frontline are heard.

The union wants to hear from as many people as possible to give a well-rounded view of who is affected and how incidents of racism are dealt with when reported. All members, regardless of race, ethnicity or religion, are invited to take part in the survey which closes on 30th October.

All answers are confidential. Take the survey today, or email motunrayo@nianro.com with any questions.



FBU NOMINATES LUCY POWELL

The FBU's executive council has nominated Lucy Powell for the role of deputy leader of the Labour Party.

The union has expressed support for Lucy Powell's call to scrap the two-child benefit cap and for full delivery of the Employment Rights Bill.

The ballot of Labour members is open until 23 October.



FBU members on an anti-cuts demonstration

Negotiations on pay reform are continuing at pace between the FBU and fire service employers. The National Joint Council met formally in early October.

The discussions centre on the need for reform to the structure of fire service pay. At present, firefighters do not receive any structured pay progression unless they get promoted. Nurses, teachers and police officers all get more money with time in the job.

There is also a postcode lottery on continuous professional development (CPD) and skills payments, and on maternity pay and other conditions, and inequality between control and operational firefighters.

The current system dates back to the Blair era, when a national pay strike ended in a deal which scrapped the fire service pay formula.

"These are complex negotiations, as we are looking to rewire an inadequate pay structure that has been in place for more than two decades,"



News Focus

Pay: the state of the negotiations

says Ben Selby, the FBU's assistant general secretary. "But it is clear that, for pretty much the first time, there is a consensus between us and the employers about both the need for reform and the need for central government investment to make it a reality."

Between the June and

'These are complex negotiations, as we are looking to rewire an inadequate pay structure'

October meetings of the NJC, the FBU gathered brigade and regional officials for national-level meetings, with a view to getting discussions moving at a branch level.

Steve Wright, FBU general secretary, says that it was "essential that members discuss our strategy on pay – because what we decide collectively will shape the future of our profession for years to come."

Crucial to the negotiations, and to the FBU's strategy, is a discussion of the role of the firefighter. "There is a consensus that the current rolemaps are not fit for

purpose and do not reflect the responsibilities set out in legislation," explains Ben Selby.

The latest set of negotiations made some progress in terms of how the role of firefighters might develop. While there may be some areas where the role could be expanded, the FBU has made it clear that these must be within an agreed framework focussed on blue-light emergency response. There may also be scope to discuss some preventative activities, for instance flood defence.

"If employers are willing to provide substantial pay uplifts for additional duties," says Steve Wright, "then that is a discussion that we are willing to have with them – that's been the FBU's policy for some years now. But it will all have to be agreed and negotiated, and the FBU's democratic structures will decide how we proceed."

The big issue is, as ever, funding. In order to deliver progress on pay, the fire service will need to see substantial investment from central government.

All hands on deck... but

This summer, two major wildfire incidents at opposite ends of England pushed firefighters to the limit. **Barrie Clement** investigates

Two massive incidents this summer gave a graphic illustration of the scandalous lack of resources in Britain's fire service. While fire and rescue services were dealt another blow to funding this year, the wildfires at Holt Heath in Dorset and Langdale Moor, Yorkshire in August dragged in precious equipment and boots on the ground from neighbouring areas and took weeks to bring under control.

ACROSS THE UK

Under the National Resilience protocol, firefighters were also sent to the incidents from across Britain. The Dorset and Wiltshire blaze was attended by firefighters from all neighbouring brigades, and from as far as South Wales, Essex, Kent, Surrey, Bedfordshire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Leicestershire, Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Lancashire.

The national emergency procedure is co-ordinated by central and local government to respond to large-scale or critical incidents. Ironically, the need to invoke the response was clear evidence of a general lack of resilience.

Not only is there a shortage of firefighters, but of resources generally. Many of those sent from different brigades didn't have wildfire PPE or training – due to a lack of national standards and lack of investment.

Years of austerity have led to such incidents becoming national emergencies. The loss of one in five firefighter posts, with fire engines taken off the run and fire stations closed across all regions, meant that when intensive wildfires broke out

there was little resilience left. Val Hampshire, FBU executive council member for the South West, pointed out that while they were dealing with the Holt Heath blaze, Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service were also tackling a fire at Newton Heath in the same county, which took over a week to extinguish.

THIN ON THE GROUND

Val highlighted that resources were 'shockingly thin' on the ground. "Dorset and Wiltshire and neighbouring services have been cut to the bone. During this wildfire there simply weren't enough firefighters available in the region.

"Lessons must be learned from this incident, and all fire and rescue services must start piling the pressure on central government for the funding needed."

The fire at Langdale Moor, North Yorkshire, started on August 11 and burned for nearly a month. At its height it covered 10 square miles.

As firefighters tackled the blaze, more than 18 unexploded Second World War bombs detonated. It was one of the largest incidents to which North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service has ever responded.

Gavin Marshall, regional secretary, Yorkshire and Humberside, said: "In the past, neighbouring brigades could step in to help, but now every service is stretched to breaking point.

"Everyone, including the government, needs to wake up: cutting the fire service is an absolute no-go. Further cuts will put the public at risk. At Langdale Moor, we even saw appliances coming from as far as London to assist North Yorkshire, because neighbouring services simply had nothing to spare.

DANGEROUSLY LITTLE COVER

"In the early stages, before reinforcements arrived, the people of North Yorkshire were left with dangerously little fire cover. That's the reality across the country – services are cut so severely that we're all just one major incident away from not being able to protect the communities we serve.

"With climate change driving more extreme and unpredictable conditions, the government shouldn't be talking about more cuts. They should be investing – making sure our communities are safe, not just day-to-day, but in the face of major disasters."

DEEP CONCERN

Brigade secretary Steve Howley, a watch manager, said he had spoken to many firefighters who had attended the Langdale Moor blaze and had expressed their deep



246
miles

Approx. 246 miles
(the distance crews travelled from
London to assist at Langdale Moor)

can the service cope?

concern about the limited resources and the impact that had on the welfare of colleagues.

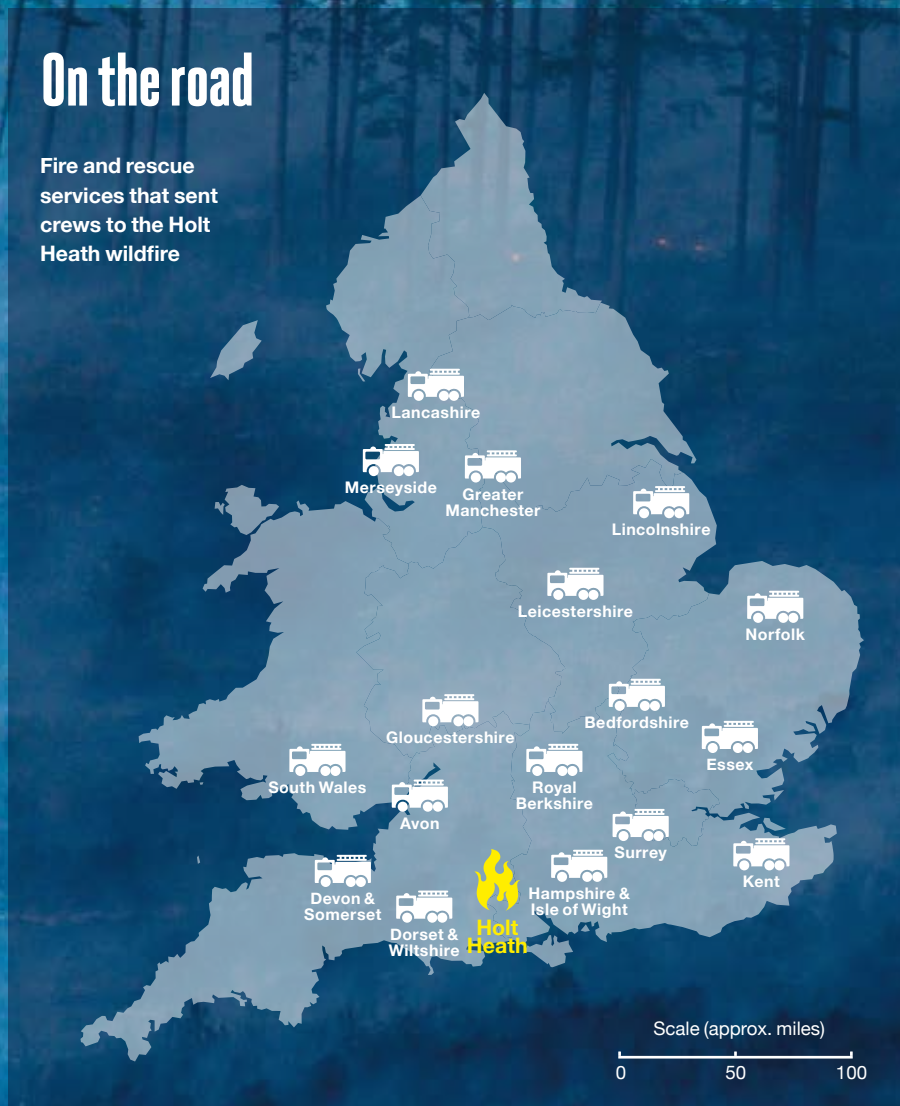
To give just one example of the crisis, the Lib Dem council in Hull says medium term cuts of £5m are the equivalent to 85 full-time firefighter posts, or 20 per cent of operational staff in Humberside. The council says this amounts to the third largest cutback facing brigades in England.

A meeting of Hull City Council unanimously backed a motion calling on the Labour government to 'properly fund' Humberside Fire and Rescue Service.

This situation will be echoed across the country – but whether councils will follow suit, and whether Westminster listens, will depend on the pressure they come under from the frontline.

On the road

Fire and rescue services that sent crews to the Holt Heath wildfire



"Services are cut so severely that we're all just one major incident away from not being able to protect the communities we serve"



Listen to the FBU Podcast episode 'Cuts cost lives'



Fighting for workers

Firefighter reports from TUC and Labour Party conference 2025

This September, FBU delegates travelled to Brighton for the annual Trades Union Congress – a conference that brings together trade unions from across the movement to discuss, debate and decide on policy.

And as a Labour-affiliated union, the FBU also intervened in the party's annual conference in Liverpool this autumn.

Here are the headlines:

Funding the fire service TUC Labour

FBU general secretary Steve Wright opened the second day of TUC Congress by calling for trade unions to join the fight against fire and rescue service cuts. The demand for investment was backed unanimously by delegates.



"My job here today is simple: to raise the alarm and warn you that if there are any more cuts to the fire service, lives will be lost."

This call was taken to Labour Party conference by the FBU, Communication Workers Union (CWU), Transport Salaried Staff Association (TSSA), and Unite the Union, with a motion demanding the reversal of austerity through a wealth tax – to fund public services and specifically address the shortage of firefighters – passed by delegates.

"Cuts kill... we need a Labour government investing in the fire service."

Wealth tax TUC

"The Sunday Times rich list in 2025 listed 156 billionaires up from 15 in 1990... If only a small amount of their wealth was taxed, there would be billions for public services."

Corniel Power, B&EMM section health and safety rep, spoke in favour of progressive taxation at TUC.



"Cuts kill. We need a Labour government investing in the fire service."

Wages not Weapons TUC

Jo Grady, general secretary of the University and College Union (UCU), brought a motion calling for the government to prioritise spending on public services instead of on defence.



Acknowledging that some union members work in the defence industry, the union called for "funding in alternative employment, not simply more of the same."

FBU president Ian Murray spoke in favour of the motion, noting that **"it's the working class that end up paying for wars"**, and that **"ministers have never explained to us why they can find extra money for defence, yet they can't find it for public services."**

"The need for these basic, essential services is much greater than the need to increase overseas military spending."

FBU and NEU delegates gather in support of the Truth About Zane campaign at the TUC, pictured with Zane's father Kye Gbangbola



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FBU general secretary
Steve Wright speaks at
Labour conference

Climate emergency **TUC**

Delegates voted for a trade union year of climate action 2025–2026, with a day of action on November 14. Sarah Woolley of the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union (BFAWU) spoke in support:

“Whether it is heatwaves making workplaces unsafe, floods devastating our communities or unaffordable energy bills eating into our wages, the reality is clear. Climate breakdown is not something that might happen in the future, it is happening now, to our members.”

Unite and GMB proposed an amendment to add that **“understanding that future fossil fuel production can only be ended when and where a fully funded workers’ plan for jobs has been agreed and delivered in full”**.

The FBU supported the motion unamended, arguing that while a just transition must be at the heart of climate action, climate change is impacting firefighters and communities now – and we cannot afford to delay campaigning. The amended motion was debated and passed.

Zane’s law **TUC**

TUC Congress voted to support Zane’s Law, named after seven year old Zane Gbangbola who died from hydrogen cyanide poisoning in 2014 after flood water passed through a historic landfill site.

Joe Weir, FBU executive council member for the South East, presented the motion, calling for the government to regulate contaminated land.



Bin strikes **Labour**

FBU national officer Adam Taylor spoke in support of a motion calling for Labour to back workers’ rights – with the Birmingham bin workers facing an £8,000 pay cut, an extreme example of government failing workers.

“To the Birmingham bin workers, the FBU have always stood with you, from the very start to the very end. In 2019, the bosses came to firefighters with a pay offer that would have meant, if we had accepted it, we’d have been breaking the strikes in Birmingham today. We will never break any strikes.”



Water pollution **Labour**

Andrew Fox-Hewitt, FBU executive council member for the North West, spoke in favour of public ownership of water. Water companies’ pollution is a threat to firefighters’ health while training and responding to floods.



Fringe: building safety **Labour**

The FBU hosted a fringe event on the building safety crisis. National Officer Mark Rowe spoke alongside Kim Johnson MP, Joe Powell MP and campaigners on building safety.



GAZA'S FIRST RESPONDERS

A life of fire and rubble

In the Gaza Strip, where the relentless grind of war has erased homes, neighbourhoods, and almost entire cities, firefighters have been lifelines in a collapsed world. Gaza-based journalist **Ghada Abdulfattah** presents a snapshot of life on the run in Gaza during the last two years

IMAGO/OMAR ASHTAWY

Smoke billows after Israel bombs Gaza City on September 10, 2025

This story is an extract from an article originally published by *The New Humanitarian* in July 2025.

Before the war, Gaza's firefighters mostly responded to routine emergencies – house fires, car accidents, and individual medical crises. During previous wars – in 2008, 2012, 2014 and 2021 – they worked under difficult conditions, but nothing prepared them for the intensity, scale, duration, and relentless pace of the Israeli assault that began following Hamas' October 2023 attacks into Israel.

BOMBED OUT RUINS

For over 20 months, Gaza's firefighters spent their time carving tunnels through bombed-out ruins trying to find survivors – and the bodies of people who have been killed – trapped underneath. During that time, Israeli airstrikes, bombardment, and ground operations killed nearly 55,000 Palestinians in Gaza and injured over 125,000, according to the Ministry of Health – although the true toll of the war, including deaths from disease, denied medical care, starvation, and other conflict-related causes, is likely significantly higher.

The firefighters brave cratered roads when the sky rains bombs, racing to the scenes of airstrikes to quench the fires with barely enough water.

"We used to save people from accidents," said Yasser Amer, a 27 year

old firefighter. "Now, we're pulling children from the debris."

UNDER FIRE

In July, *The New Humanitarian* spent two days with Amer and the team of firefighters he is a part of at their base in al-Mawasi, along Gaza's southern coast. Multiple rounds of Israeli evacuation orders and assaults on cities over the course of the war have forced hundreds of thousands of people to flee here. The area is covered in tents, housing displaced people as far as the eye can see.

The team of firefighters is part of the Palestinian Civil Defence, a civilian agency – affiliated with Gaza's Ministry of Interior – that is responsible for providing emergency and relief services. The Civil Defence force has been a key source of photos, videos, and initial death tolls following airstrikes during the current war, and Israel has sought to delegitimise the information it provides due to its affiliation with Gaza's Hamas-run government. But the Civil Defence workers *The New Humanitarian* spoke to said they are impartial humanitarian workers who carry out their lifesaving work in accordance with international humanitarian law.

In a war that has seen the indiscriminate – and sometimes allegedly intentional – killing of aid workers, journalists, and medical personnel, members of the Palestinian Civil Defence have not been spared. A staggering 113 have been killed – including six who were shot dead when Israeli soldiers massacred 15 first responders in Rafah on 23 March.

EARLY SHIFT

On the first morning, the leader of the team, 44-year-old Ahmed Radwan, began his shift early, as he always does,

"No new fire engines have been allowed into Gaza"

Ahmed Radwan, the leader of a brigade of Palestinian firefighters, hugs a team member at the group's base in the Gaza Strip's al-Mawasi region



GHADA ABDULFATTAH/TNH

>> by checking the two firefighting vehicles at the group's base in al-Mawasi.

Broad-shouldered and with an easy smile, he joked with his team members and with children on the adjacent street as he went about the morning. A veteran firefighter of over 18 years, he was born in Rafah and raised his four children there – until he was displaced and moved just a few steps away from where he now works.

The base itself is no more than three tents pitched together, improvised under the open sky. Uniforms, spare clothes, and towels are hung on lines strung between poles and tent stakes, drying in the sun. A small shack made of palm leaves sits close to the street. This is where the team gathers and boils tea over an open fire. They share jokes about their meagre salaries, which all too frequently arrive late, stories from days spent on the front lines, and wishes for the bloodshed to end.

"THEY'VE SEEN HELL"

As Radwan made his morning rounds, he tapped the tank of one of the red fire trucks. "There's enough water," he said, "but the battery doesn't work."

Each truck has a unique identification code on its roof and sides, which the firefighters share with the Israeli military through the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in an effort to avoid being targeted.

He continued to clean the truck's hood, tightened loose wires, and prayed it would not fail them. "These vehicles are outdated and have not been maintained," he said, pointing to the truck's broken windshield, cracked by an Israeli airstrike. "They've seen hell."

Since the war began, no new fire engines have been allowed into Gaza, and spare parts are extremely scarce. Even before then, the Israeli blockade, imposed since 2007, made maintaining the vehicles difficult, with simple pieces of equipment like jumper cables hard to come by.

Since October 2023, the wear and tear on the vehicles and scarcity of resources for maintenance has become exponentially worse. The hardest period has been since the beginning of March this year, according to Radwan, when

Israel imposed a total siege on Gaza, intensifying the shortage of supplies.

During the massacre in March, Israeli soldiers crushed a fire engine and buried it in the sand – along with five ambulances and a UN vehicle. Radwan knew the six Civil Defence workers who were killed well. "We didn't lose one or two – we lost a whole shift," Radwan said, his voice flat.

"It's not easy to see how our lives have become so cheap – how we're left unprotected, even though we should be [protected], like rescue workers everywhere else in the world."

CHASING BOMBS

As the morning stretched on, some of the firefighters chatted in the palm-leaf

"Parents were screaming: 'Where are the children?'"

Firefighters put out a blaze after an Israeli strike on al-Mawasi



UPI/ALAMY

Palestinian firefighting capabilities have been severely reduced, with resources for maintenance extremely scarce



shack, drinking tea. Others lounged inside one of the tents. Suddenly, a loud explosion broke the relative calm. The team immediately snapped into action, loading into one of the fire trucks without waiting for an emergency call.

Internet and phone services have been cut off at different times, plunging Gaza's 2.1 million residents into complete communication blackouts.

"We've come to depend on the eye and on the ear – on what we see and hear," Radwan said. "The sound of the explosion, the direction of the smoke, that's how we find the next strike."

"In the absence of communication, we had to improvise," he said. "We began sending an ambulance to the hospital, where it would wait for wounded people who arrive first to tell us where the airstrikes had occurred."

On the day of *The New Humanitarian's* visit, the loud explosion, a plume of smoke rising into the sky, and crowds immediately rushing in the direction gave it away. It was coming from a cluster of tents behind the Kuwait Specialised Field Hospital – nearly two and half kilometres from the base.

When the firefighters arrived on the scene, the fire was raging. Thick black smoke billowed into the air, people were running in all directions, and a man was dragging two children out of one of the burning tents.

WATER SHORTAGE

At the scene, Amer started giving instructions. With limited water in their tanks, the firefighters worked quickly to isolate the fire from other highly flammable tents nearby. They doused the missile debris, cylinders of cooking gas – most of them empty – and anything else that could potentially spread the fire.



Ahmed Radwan (right), Yasser Amer (centre), Raed Ashour (left) heading out in a fire engine from their base in al-Mawasi

GHADA ABDULFATTAH/TNH

With access to water severely limited, they were careful to ration their supplies, saving as much as possible for the aftermath of the inevitable next strike. Using shovels, they dug into the sandy soil and used it to extinguish the flames.

“It’s a race against catastrophe,” Radwan said. “If we use all the water at once, we run out before we reach the source of the fire. If we go slow, the fire spreads.”

Once the fire was put out, the firefighters donned compressed air tanks to search the burned-out tents and the inside of a one-room building housing displaced people. “We searched every corner – but found nothing. Still, parents were screaming: ‘Where are the children?’”

CARRYING MEMORIES

The following day, the firefighters were back at their base, prepared to respond to another emergency. Conversation drifted to past incidents. The hardest part, they said, isn’t the fire but what comes after. Many of the firefighters carry memories of the airstrikes they have responded to, down to the smallest detail.

Amer recalled one of the first incidents he responded to after October 2023. A house had been hit by an Israeli airstrike, reducing it to a pile of fallen concrete and twisted metal. Somehow, a 15-year-old boy named Hammouda had survived. Buried under two and a half metres of debris and cradled in his

mother’s arms, he clutched a phone in his hand that he had managed to use to call for help. His mother was already dead.

HANDS AND SHOVELS

“I could hear him the whole time. He kept saying, over and over, that he couldn’t breathe.”

There was no heavy machinery to use for excavation – just iron rods, a few shovels, jacks, and the firefighters’ trembling hands. For six hours, Amer and the team he was working with dug with these basic tools, guiding an oxygen tube and water underneath the rubble to keep the boy alive. Any misstep or shift in the debris could have crushed him. “But he never panicked,” Amer recalled. “He held on.”

Airstrikes thundered in the distance, and at one point, Amer had to leave to respond to another house that had been hit. Radwan and Samir Bahabsa carried on with the excavation until Hammouda was finally pulled up alive.

After every strike the firefighters respond to, chaos follows. “We see people at their worst moment,” said Said Qishta, a 25-year-old member of

the team. “And still we have to keep moving. From one fire to the next. From one scream to another.”

Qishta narrowly escaped being killed in the massacre at the end of March. He used to work the same shift as the firefighters who responded that night. Two days before the massacre, he had rotated to work out of a different location.

“I should have been with them that night,” he said, of his former team, his eyes cast downward. “But I had moved to a new location. Just luck.”

LITTLE RELIEF

Qishta recently had his first child – a baby boy. He named him Adam, wishing for him to have a better and brighter life than what his father has witnessed.

After each mission, Amer calls home. “I’m fine. All is good. Stop worrying about me,” he said to his wife on the phone after returning from responding to the missile strike on the tents behind the Kuwait Specialised Field Hospital. “Let me talk to Sila,” he added, softly. His daughter’s voice came through. “I’m fine, Baba,” she said. Amer smiled for just a moment. Then he put his helmet back on.

“We have to keep moving. From one fire to the next”

■ *The New Humanitarian* puts quality, independent journalism at the service of the millions of people affected by humanitarian crises around the world. Find out more and read the full article at www.thenewhumanitarian.org

You'll never walk alone may be the preferred terrace anthem at Anfield. But as Manchester's football-loving firefighters – be they City blue, United red, or in FBU rep Patrick Brennan's case, Burnley – have discovered, trade union members everywhere can join forces as football fans.

Last month Brennan – rep at Salford and a Greater Manchester firefighter these past eight years brought a special guest to their branch meeting: Chris Neville from Trade Union Blues (TUB), a collective of time-served Manchester City fans from various unions, representing fans and club employees' interests.

FANS WINNING

Neville, also president of Manchester Trades Council – the city's umbrella body for trade unions since 1866 – explained how the TUB model can be replicated to put fan pressure on clubs.

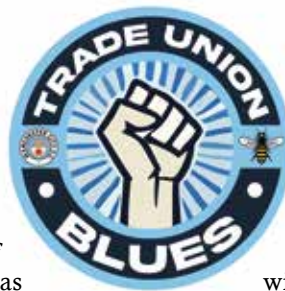
He detailed concessions won on season-ticket prices – frozen at City for the first time in five years – and how the group can confront the attempts of far-right organisations such as Britain First to infiltrate clubs.

"We've ended up using our organising experience as trade unionists to bring the club into a new area, and get results for working-class people," Neville says.

Brennan felt the meeting – football offering a new and refreshing perspective to union discussions – was a thought-provoking reminder of the value of collective bargaining.

"It went down really, really well," he said. "Chris spoke punchily, and people pricked their ears up and bought into it – the thinking behind it was to try and get people to look at the bigger picture, those external forces that shape our lives outside of the fire station."

"Members sometimes ask 'what's the union got to do with politics?' he adds. "But – as with sport and politics



– the two things are inseparable. You can't bring about changes in your workplaces unless you can enforce that wider change – it's exactly the same with sport."

TUB only formed at the start of the year, but Neville – a season-ticket holder at City for 30 years – is buoyed by their success, and wants to help spread the message.

NINE MINUTES

"We may be City-related," he says. "But we're keen to encourage fans of other clubs who are trade unionists to try similar initiatives, because ultimately all fans get shafted by the same things."

Among TUB's achievements thus far were last season's visible, well-planned protests – fans were asked not to take their seats until nine minutes into April's game with Leicester City, in response to the club pairing with a ninth ticket resale partner in Viagogo – and the capping of individual match

Never walk alone

FBU members in Manchester met with the Trade Union Blues, a group of football fans taking on profiteering club owners and organising as trade unionists. **Steve Morgan** reports

MCFC - FOR THE LOVE

Manchester City supporters protest against the club's owners

ticket prices. Ultimately, like any union action, it's about solidarity and shared connections – people and community. "A lot of us used to go to City games together, meeting up before the game," says Neville.

"The other thing we had in common was that we were all trade unionists or reps, or working for unions, so decided to set something up formally. Not long after we did, we kind of got thrown into action, because City owners have been doing things that have pissed the fans off for ages."

Brennan feels football can be a unifying, rallying force and can testify to lively afternoons following games when at work. "You can't escape football in fire stations – it's everywhere, especially when you're working weekends," he says. "It's part

of the morale, the team building, a big part of fire station life."

CLUB WORKERS' RIGHTS

He feels the TUB model, with a combined total of 150 years of union membership at committee level, is instructive and easily adaptable. The Football Supporters Association (FSA)

agree – they recently passed a motion to support the unionisation of football workers. The TUB, as members of the FSA, will collaborate with them and fans' groups to try and push clubs to offer better workers' rights.

"It's a perfect example of what can happen with proper organising, really – getting around a shared issue, banding together," says Brennan.

AN OPEN GOAL

"It's nothing new, but it's very easy to understand. A lot of our members are really young, and haven't had the experience of the power of proper organising like that. Combining that with something as relatable as football is just an open goal. The response was really good – from Reds and Blues." Not forgetting Burnley.

**"We can take on
billionaire club
owners, like any
bosses, and win"**



The Trade Union Blues are a collective of Manchester City fans from various unions



ALAMY

Winner Paul Young

► Suffolk Fire and Rescue coxswain power boat training on the River Deben, trialling a new helmet and training in boat handling skills.

Judges' comments:

The colour contrast is brilliant – blue against bright red and yellow. The whole image feels bright and sunny, and you can really see the joy in the firefighters' faces as they carry out the training. The framing within the firefighters' glasses is excellent, and there is so much up-close detail on the helmet. It's hard to take your eyes away!



The results are in!

FBU Photo Competition 2025

The judges give their verdict on the winners, runners up and calendar favourites this year.

“Members’ submissions were greatly varied in their subjects and compositions, and of impressive quality this year. Some images made us laugh and others were simply mesmerising. Many photos had interesting architectural elements, and others that told stories about the firefighters in view of – and behind – the camera.”





Runner-up Gordon Curran

▼ Realistic training scenarios can be hard to organise on the Isle of Skye. A local builder allowed retained firefighters from Bowmore and Port Ellen to use a building for a training

event, perfect for BA compartment search and rescue.
Judges' comments: Beautiful contrast of light and shadow here. We loved the minimalist composition, which reflects the experience of the firefighters, training with restricted vision. It's cinematic – like a still from a film.



Runner-up Hannah Tyler

◀ This was taken at the recent Hotspur Press fire in Manchester on 23 June 2025. In the photo, firefighters are battling a terrible fire that destroyed

one of the oldest mills in Manchester. The incident was attended by Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service and neighbouring services.
Judges' comments: This photo tells a story of comradery, and you feel like you're there with the firefighters at the incident. The arm

around the shoulders is a striking way to visualise the teamwork and support with the crew. We loved the colours, with the dusky sky contrasting with the fluorescence of the uniforms.

A selection of twelve of the judges' favourite pics will be printed in the upcoming FBU 2026 calendar: pre-order yours today.

■ shop.fbu.org.uk



PPE must be safe for women

Threats to women's specific PPE are a safety risk, says the FBU's **National Women's Committee**

In 1996, firefighter Fleur Lombard lost her life in the line of duty. Her death remains a stark reminder that inadequate PPE design can have fatal consequences. Nearly three decades later, the same danger persists: PPE that ignores women's body shapes leaves firefighters exposed.

This is not about comfort or cosmetics, it's about health and safety. Ill-fitting PPE restricts movement, creates gaps, reduces grip, and increases the risk of burns and contamination. Too-large boots cause slips, oversized gloves compromise dexterity, and jackets cut for men may leave gaps where flames or toxic substances can enter.

The FBU National Women's Committee (NWC) fought hard to end this neglect. NWC campaigning led to the creation of SOPHIE, a female-form heat-sensing manikin, commissioned by the HSE. As the HSE report explained: "significant differences in burn injury do occur between male and female manikins wearing the same design of clothing."

Those differences are life and death. Testing showed that when standard firefighter jackets and trousers were placed on the female manikin, gaps appeared where flames could enter, particularly around the waist and torso. The design, shaped for a male body, left the female form more vulnerable to burn injury. In real fire conditions, that weakness could mean devastating injuries in the very areas the gear is supposed to protect.

Today, women-specific firefighting PPE, used in some brigades, includes additional fire-protective padding around the breasts and hips and wider trouser braces to prevent pressure – and resulting burns – on the chest area. These are not cosmetic tweaks: they are vital safety measures designed to prevent injuries



Women-specific firefighting PPE is currently used in some brigades but not all

that men's kit never accounted for. Removing such protections would be a reckless step backwards.

Another HSE test highlighted that identical PPE fitted on the female manikin produced a different burn pattern: air gaps created by the chest shape sometimes reduced burns to the abdomen, but this "protective effect" was inconsistent and unreliable under different PPE combinations. The lesson is clear: only PPE specifically designed and tested for women can ensure reliable safety.

Employers are legally obliged under PPE regulations to provide suitable equipment, free of charge. Suitable cannot mean "scaled-down men's kit".

The FBU's DECON campaign reinforces why this matters. Poor fit doesn't just risk acute burns, it increases long-term exposure to toxic, cancer-causing contaminants. Protection that doesn't seal correctly

is no protection at all.

Women-specific PPE is not a luxury or an afterthought, it is a legal duty, a safety requirement, and a moral imperative. We owe Fleur Lombard, and every firefighter, nothing less than full and equal protection. We do not support unisex PPE and will challenge this on all fronts.

■ The FBU executive council discussed the issue of women's PPE on 14 October. Following this, new FBU national officer Adam Taylor agreed to write to all chief fire officers to ascertain what provisions they have in place for women's PPE, and to set out the FBU's position. The FBU is also attending the NFCC PPE Committee, and has identified a number of issues arising which will be of concern to members, including a procurement project which is currently underway.



Meet the rep

Jamie (Ted) McDonald,
branch rep, Lochgelly, Scotland

What made you want to become a rep?

In 2023, I was part of the campaign against 'temporary cuts' being forced through without public consultation in Scotland. I then transferred to Lochgelly fire station and learned what being an FBU rep is all about: fighting wider issues like cuts, standing against injustices on station, and making conditions better for all of us.

What are the major issues impacting the members you represent?

Job cuts. Recently the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service conducted a public consultation on cuts across the country. Both options that have been presented to the public in Lochgelly involve our station losing a fire engine, 20 firefighters, and our rope rescue unit. Our members are worried about the increased risk to the communities we serve, and the dangers to us, as firefighters, having to do more with less.

What's been your proudest moment during the campaign against cuts so far?

Seeing the community stand together as part of our campaign against these cuts. We organised a public meeting, bringing residents together with FBU members, which was a huge success. Then, at our local public consultation meeting, there wasn't enough space in the room to fit all the people who turned up!

What have you learned during your most recent campaign?

It is much easier for those at the top to cut public services or make our working conditions worse if we are divided.

Who are your working class / trade union heroes?

Watching Mick Lynch handle the smears from the press around the 2022 rail strikes was inspiring. Also, listen to Ricky Tomlinson at Jamie Webster's concert at Sefton Park, especially his "Something's Gotta Give" poem!

What piece of advice would you give a new rep?

Your voice is so much more powerful with the weight of your members behind you, for the little wins on station or bigger campaigns.

What was the last thing you read or had a conversation about that made you think differently about something?

You don't have to change who you are as a person when speaking to those in a position of authority.

If you had the aux cord at a rally, what song would you play?

Dropkick Murphys – Who Will Stand With Us



What's new?

Burn to protect?

The Wales Wildfire Board are encouraging farmers and landowners to "Burn to Protect" the Welsh countryside over the coming season.

This may sound counter-intuitive, but fire has been used as a land-management tool for thousands of years in highland areas across the UK. Controlled burning can decrease the amount of flammable vegetation across a large area.

But the RSPB is calling for moorlands to be restored to peat wetlands. Heather – an oily, flammable plant – generally grows back after a burn, whereas a diversity of plants and waterlogged soil can prevent fire spreading.

The question of land ownership lies beneath this raging debate. Half of England and Scotland is owned by 1% of the population, and 8% of land in Britain is managed as grouse moor: wildfire-prone habitats created for the aristocratic sport of shooting grouse.

In England, grouse moors cover more land than Greater London and are owned by lords, earls, dukes and barons, as well as bankers and firms based in offshore tax havens.

As the climate crisis intensifies, these estates will transform into tinder boxes with increasing frequency – and it'll be firefighters out there battling the blazes.





President's dispatch

FBU president Ian Murray on what members can do next in the fight for pay reform

Outside of the annual pay review or promotion, our current pay structure has left most firefighters and firefighter control on the same flat rate of pay for years. It's outdated, and out of step with other public services.

In the NHS and teaching, workers rightly move up pay bands the longer they serve in the job.

Since 2003, most of the workforce has been stuck with limited opportunity for pay progression. And for the last fifteen years, we have seen the value of pay fall.

The FBU is currently negotiating with the National Joint Council, pushing for pay reform. We are clear that we want fair pay progression; an end to the continued professional development (CPD) postcode lottery; pay parity for control staff and an improved package for retained firefighters.

And underpinning all this, we need investment in the fire and rescue service to make it happen.

This October, alongside other national FBU representatives, I sat opposite the employers. The FBU made it clear that this won't wait. We need to see pay reform in 2026.

You, as members, must have your say and get involved. If your brigade hasn't already organised a meeting on pay reform, ask your local officials to arrange one.

■ Details can be found by visiting fbu.org.uk/campaigns/pay-reform

PALESTINE FUNDRAISER

Special edition 'Justice for Palestine' T-shirt

This t-shirt has been produced to raise funds and deliver direct solidarity to the Palestine Solidarity Campaign – aiming to support the civilians of Palestine and achieve peace, equality and justice, as voted for by this year's annual FBU conference.

The image of a raised hand holding a key represents the Palestinians' right of return to their homeland, while the back reads 'Firefighters for Palestine'.

All proceeds go to the Palestine Solidarity Campaign.

Show your solidarity with Palestinians and their struggle for justice.

■ shop.fbu.org.uk



UNION DUES

Important reminder for members on reduced pay

Members who are not in receipt of full pay whilst on maternity and parental leave, or sickness and injury related leave, are exempt from payment of union dues.

To suspend contributions during a period of reduced pay, email membership@fbu.org.uk with a copy of the correspondence from your employer including the date and reason for the reduction in your pay.

To remain an FBU member after a period of reduced pay, please ensure that you notify the membership team to resume union contributions.

CALENDAR

Calendar pre-orders open

The FBU 2026 Calendar is now available for pre-order. Featuring winning images from our firefighting photo competition, the proceeds from this calendar all go towards supporting firefighters and fire service good causes.

■ shop.fbu.org.uk

BOOK

Culpable: setting the record straight about Grenfell

Culpable: Deregulation, Austerity and the Causes of the Grenfell Tower Fire, by Paul Hampton with a foreword by Steve Wright, is now available in paperback and e-book editions from Pluto Press.

Culpable is a searing indictment of the government's role in the Grenfell Tower fire. Meticulously researched, and drawing on the extensive findings of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, *Culpable* sets the record straight and challenges readers to consider the fundamental issues of power and violence that remain unresolved in the aftermath of Grenfell.

■ plutobooks.com/product/culpable





Wright on the Road

■ **7–10 September** Attended TUC conference

■ **28 Sept–1 October** Attended Labour party conference calling for funding for the fire and rescue service, and speaking at fringe events

■ **7 October** Negotiations on pay with the National Joint Council in Cardiff

■ **30 October** Visiting annual B&EMM sectional school



Steve Wright alongside the FBU team staffing the union's stall at Labour Party conference

COMING UP

■ **10–14 November** Meeting reps from across the UK at FBU national school

■ **19 November** Joining a meeting of the South Yorkshire brigade committee

■ **26 November** Responding to the Chancellor announcing the government budget for the upcoming year

■ **29 November** Speaking at GFTU political economy conference at Quorn Grange

Does his safety trump ours?

Station Cat on full crews being sent for the president's visit

Your cat has twice asked Buckinghamshire FRS why the fire appliances sent to Chequers to help protect President Trump last month had crews of five, when those protecting the citizens of the county are only allocated four.

Either four is enough, in which case it's enough for President Trump; or you really need five to be safe, in which case, why do the residents of Buckinghamshire have to make do with four?

Your cat was not alone in her wonderment. The *International Fire and Safety Journal* ran the story and asked the same question. Like Station Cat, they got no answer. Bucks FRS stayed schtum.

As well they might. Since 2010, the Buckinghamshire FRS workforce has dropped by more than a third. It has cut its budget relentlessly, and receives some of the lowest council tax funding in England.

But it can afford fire appliances with a full complement of five firefighters parked up outside Chequers for the Trump visit. It was part of a huge security operation designed to ensure



that the US president felt entirely at home.

Drones, horses, dogs and marine units were all in use. And rather ominously, the police announced that they were monitoring social

media to check for "misinformation or disinformation" and "monitor the mood in the community."

Even so, the president brought his own huge security detail – dozens of FBI men in sharp suits.

And yet, despite all this, someone managed to project onto the walls of Windsor Castle a forbidden photograph of Donald Trump joking with... Jeffrey Epstein.

The authorities were furious. Months of grovelling to Washington could be put at risk. Four people were quickly arrested, though it's hard to see what they could be charged with.

Chief Superintendent Felicity Parker told the media: "We take any unauthorised activity around Windsor Castle extremely seriously."

Your cat thinks the authorities should take "unauthorised activity around Windsor Castle" rather less seriously that the safety of the people of Buckinghamshire.



"Just one more little cut, no one will notice..."

25-year badges



Suzanne Goff (r) receives her 25-year badge and certificate from Chichester branch rep **Jamie Younger** (l)



Lee Greener (l), Newcastle central fire station, Tyne and Wear, receives his 25-year badge from his son **Tom Greener** (r)



Ian (Jack) Brown, blue watch, Peaks Lane, Grimsby, Humberside Fire and Rescue Service, receives his 25-year badge



Sam Woodhams receives his 25-year badge from London officers chair **Peter Johnson** with colleagues at London headquarters



Lucy Holmes, training school and **Andy Hinchley**, officers branch, receive their 25-year badges from brigade secretary **Matt Nicholls**, with South Yorkshire Branch Reps



Nick Chan (l), blue watch, Adwick, receives his 25-year badge from Adwick branch secretary **Craig Sawyer**, with colleagues



Chris White (l), training centre, Droitwich, Hereford and Worcester receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser **Andrew Faizey** (r)



Neil Bennett (l), green watch, Wyre Forest and on-call USAR technician at Droitwich, Hereford and Worcester receives his 25-year badge from **Andrew Faizey** (r)



Leon Penistone, red watch, Thorne, receives his 25-year badge with members of Thorne, Birley and ORT



Angus Taylor (r), Tayport fire station, Fife, receives his 25-year badge from station rep **Kenny Culross** (l) with crew members **Jody McCafferty**, **Shan Atkinson**, **Neil Colville**, **Dougie Cook**, **Ian Ness** and **Jonny Robinson**



Mick Taylor (r), red watch, Parkway receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Alex Wilson (l) with colleagues



Colin Lawson (r), white watch, Motherwell white watch receives his 25-year badge from branch sec Liam Goldie (l)



Dan Brown (l), Agecroft, Manchester receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Lee McNab (r)



Steve Deakin (r), Lewes fire station, East Sussex receives his 25-year badge, presented by branch secretary Darren Foord (l)



Lee Kelsey (l), white watch, Willenhall, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Adam Lovatt (r) with Stewart Bird, Ashleigh Durston, and Matt Warrilow



West of Scotland area vice chair **Ross Pollok** (r) receives his 25-year badge from West of Scotland area secretary Alex Muir (l)



Lynsey Bishop (r) receives his 25-year badge from borough rep Mark Boileau (l), surrounded by members of Coventry Green, West Midlands



Dave Jones (l), red watch, Farnham, Surrey receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Frazer Tait (r)



Chris Pedroza (l), red watch, East Sussex, receives his 25-year badge with watch colleagues



David Bowness (l), red watch, Bridgend, South Wales receives his 25 year badge from branch rep Sean Cayford with colleagues Chloe Williams, Luke Davies, Gavin David, David Bowness, branch rep Sean Cayford, Dean Vokes, and Rod Jones (l-r)



Mike Edwards, Rhyl, North Wales (r) receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Gavin Roberts at Rhyl Fire Station



Richard 'Dickie' Beecher (r), Rotherham Green, South Yorkshire, receives his 25-year badge from Rotherham branch secretary Charlotte Grayhurst (l) with members of Rotherham Branch looking on

»



Gareth Withers (l), blue watch, Aldridge, Wesr Midlands, receives his 25-year badge from borough rep, Neil Kinsey (r) alongside Stuart Hinds, Rob Hendon, Rob Benton and Neil Goodwin (l-r)



Darran Sampson (r), Hove, East Sussex, receives his 25 year badge from Jake Kaye (r) with colleagues Louisa Curtis and Tom Glandfield (l-r)



Ian Scott (r) receives his 25-year badge from Cleveland brigade organiser Nick Cain (l), alongside colleagues from Yarm Fire Station branch



Richard Guy (l), Bridge of Allan, Stirling, receives his 25-year medal from branch rep John Bryce (r)



Darren Barrett (r), brigade organiser, Bedfordshire FBU, receives his 25-year badge from general secretary Steve Wright (l) at the 2025 Conference in Blackpool



Gary Hay (l), green watch, Dunfermline receives his 25 year badge from Stuart Taylor (r) Scotland East Area lead rep



Jason Noah (l), blue watch, Slough, Berkshire receives his 25-year badge from Adam Rushworth (r)



Mark Hampton (l), Grays Fire Station, Essex, receives his 25-year badge from Essex brigade organiser Matt Edwards (r) surrounded by members of white watch, Grays

40-year badge



Ann Sharp (l) Joint Fire Control, Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire, receives her 40 year badge from Derbyshire brigade secretary Chris Tapp (r)



Rob Bailey (l), green watch, Bridgend, South Wales receives his 25 year badge from branch rep Sean Cayford (r)



Andrew Tennant (r) receives his 25-year badge from West of Scotland Vice Chair Ross Pollok (l)



Matt Gregory (l), Heathrow fire station receives his 25-year badge from executive council member for London David Shek (r)



Arron Jones (r), green watch, Wrexham, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Rich Clutton (l), watched on by green watch colleagues

Please send high resolution digital files or prints to: firefighter@fbu.org.uk or Firefighter, FBU, Ken Cameron House, 171-173 Gray's Inn Road, London, WC1X 8UE

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

FBU REGIONAL OFFICES

REGION 1 Scotland

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

REGION 2 N Ireland

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

REGION 3 Cleveland, Durham, Northumberland, Tyne & Wear

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

REGION 4 Humberside, North Yorkshire, South Yorkshire and West Yorkshire

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

The Waterside Offices, Pavilion Road, West
Bridford, Nottingham, NG2 5FA
Region06@fbu.org.uk

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

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

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

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

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

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

REGION 10 London

Alpha House, 100 Borough High Street,
London SE1 1LB
020 7359 3638, london@fbu.org.uk

REGION 11 East Sussex, Kent, Surrey, West Sussex

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

REGION 12 Bucks, Berks, Hampshire and Isle of Wight, Oxfordshire

Eleanor Marx House,
Unit 2, 12 Richfield Place,
Reading, RG1 8EQ

REGION 13 Avon, Cornwall, Devon & Somerset, Dorset & Wiltshire, Gloucestershire

158 Muller Road, Horfield,
Bristol, BS7 9RE
0117 235 7605, 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

England, Wales and N Ireland

0800 100 6061

Scotland 0800 089 1331

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.



THOMPSONS
SOLICITORS

WARNING: FIREFIGHTERS AND THE PUBLIC AT RISK



For over a decade, successive governments have cut our fire and rescue service to the bone. Now, more cuts are on the cards in your area and across the country.



We are calling on the government to stop all cuts to fire services; invest in firefighters and fire service resources; and introduce national standards so no community is left behind.

Join the campaign and write to your MP today.



TAKE ACTION