



Fire Brigades Region

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All Members
Region 1
Scotland

7th July 2014

Continuous Professional Development Payments (CPD)

Dear Brother/Sister,

As has been previously reported in February of this year:

A working group is to be established to discuss additional responsibility allowances (ARA) and continual professional development payments (CPD). You will be aware that we have some areas being paid ARA's for the same work that other members are doing without any additional payment. We also have 8 different CPD payment levels, both of these cannot continue for obvious reasons. Members will be kept informed of the work of the group and any proposals., One early indication is that the service would prefer to move to a rate that covers both CPD and ARA's and makes that payment available for all.

Progress on this issue was reported to the Scottish Regional Committee on the 4th July, it is somewhat disappointing that a false/slanted version of this report has been created and circulated on some social media. This circular is to redress those inaccuracies.

A meeting was held recently in London between the Assistant General Secretary, the President, EC member for Scotland and the Deputy CFO and the Chair of the Board who were all attending the National Joint Council (NJC) to discuss this issue along with other Union matters, a number of subsequent meetings have also taken place.

If we were to settle for the NJC calculation for CPD then the payment would be £648 across the board. This would mean that more than half of our members would see their income reduced. We have therefore proposed that a higher payment is provided and a figure of around £750 has been suggested. We are attempting to get this figure further increased. We are also conscious that one area would still require 'cushioning' as the suggested figure remains less than the current payment.

The proposals for a Scottish Allowance is separate from the current NJC work considering the range of activity that fire and rescue service's wish to discuss our members undertaking (some of which have already been introduced in a number of FRS's) Whilst separate from this ongoing work it is also related, in that over recent years the range of tasks and specialist skills undertaken by firefighters has increased significantly. This must also be considered within a context of a significant and sustained reduction in fire calls.

This is clearly **NOT a race to the bottom** as some would like you to believe, it is the development of proposals using the - unanimously agreed, by the Scottish Regional Committee - 'working together' process which is itself the practical implementation of the NJC good working relations.

As you know ARA's payments are widely varied across the country and the SFRS are therefore vulnerable to challenge on paying different rates for the same work. ARA's are also a removable allowance and can be withdrawn from members at any time if the service remove or move a specialist resource , this is why this payment is not currently pensionable.

The move to a single CPD payment may be part of a journey to a Scottish allowance and further negotiations will need to take place to examine the additional skills that may be covered by any 'allowance'. It is also our aim to secure any agreed payment of a Scottish allowance as part of members' core wages so that the full benefit can be added to your pension.

To reiterate the Regional committee met on Friday 4th with the newly elected district officials from districts 1 through to 5 taking their places. Members in Districts 6 and 7 were represented by reps from the former Strathclyde and Dumfries & Galloway Brigades. These officials will be feeding back to your branch reps what was actually raised and discussed at the meeting; however I feel it important to put out factual information at this time in order to counter the myth, rumours and distortions that maliciously misrepresent the current discussions over CPD harmonisation and the anticipated negotiations over the potential introduction of a Scottish allowance.

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Yours fraternally



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