

## **Update on Reform**

The FBU continues to believe that the internal structures of the union are the best way to distribute accurate facts, to discuss and debate topics, options and choices. The Scottish Committee met on Thursday and Friday last week (w.e. 25/1/13) to deliberate on a number of items which are currently under consideration as part of the development of the FRS.

This update outlines a number of these topics, which having been discussed by your elected officials, can now be shared more widely. Full details will be obtained by attending your branch meetings.

### **Re-alignment of Watches**

All 8 current F&R services utilise the 2 days, 2 nights and 3 days off rota, but there are a number of variations to the watch arrangements, including start times and several variations in which colour watch is on duty at any one time. Within the 7 services who use the traditional 4 watch duty system (i.e. except Strathclyde who use the 5 Group duty system) 3 services are 1 day out of step in relation to start days. In order to bring all 7 of the 4 watch services together the SLT have approached us with regards standardisation of the duty system.

The proposals would effect;

Central -	adjustment by 1 day, plus some colour changes
D&G -	some colour changes
Fife -	adjustment by 1 day, plus some colour changes
Grampian -	no change
H&I -	adjustment by 1 day, plus some colour changes
L&B -	no change
Strathclyde -	no change
Tayside -	some colour changes

The proposals from the service are designed to affect the least number of people. Final detail is still under negotiation and will be progressed through local officials. For those services required to adjust their sequence this will involve a payment offer to members effected. A number of knock-on consequences have been identified, but the service have agreed to deal with these on an individual basis when they arise. Further information will be produced, specific to each current service.

### **Control Room Project**

This project has now been relocated from the reform workstreams to the Response & Resilience Directorate. The FBU continues to be involved in the project that will now come under the newly appointed team led by David Goodhew. There remains a substantial amount of detailed technical analysis to be carried out before any 'final state' plan can be considered.

The FBU officials involved remain of the view that until the technical elements can be finalised, the detailed arrangements cannot be considered. However the broad principles remain that there will be no compulsory redundancies, no forced relocation, but voluntary relocation and re-training options must be available to members. This has been agreed with the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT), however in the short term the pressing issue is the retention of skilled staff.

## **RDS**

Also under the R&R directorate is a workstream looking at the issue of providing fire & rescue cover in rural areas. It has been known for some time that with changes to the way we live and work, it is increasing difficult to maintain crewing levels during certain times of the day, especially in areas that have a high level of commuting.

The FBU has already started the process of considering how these issues might be best addressed. The Scottish Committee and the RDS Sub-Committee have both been tasked with looking into this topic and further work will be undertaken when the Scottish Committee next meets, for a specific meeting on these workstream topics.

It is important that RDS stations are linked to their local FBU structure. Only by being involved can members know what is going on and influence the process. Any station wishing more information can contact their local rep or can get in touch with the Scottish Region, who will arrange for contact to be made.

## **Officers**

Most of the arrangement for area managers are now known and whilst there are some points that we have raised with the SLT, the stability that will provide is welcome. Work is underway to develop the early days structure for GM and SM levels. We anticipate having the draft structure by mid February.

A number of questions have been raised about the changes on day 1. For clarification; there is to be no 'big bang' on day 1. Each officer will either be allocated into a new post or will continue in their existing post. That will be determined by agreement on the early days draft (above). During year 1 those individuals who are in temporary positions will revert to rank. This will not happen all at once and will not happen on 1<sup>st</sup> April.

The officer arrangements are being developed with the service and the FBU officer members Sub-Committee is actively working on these details. The numbers required for incident command and for the functional posts throughout the service are being considered currently, but these are not day 1 specific and will be developed and implemented over time. Officer members are encouraged to attend local meetings to hear in detail about the work that is progressing.

## **CPD/ARA**

Currently across the 8 services CPD is paid at different levels. For those who recall the change from the previous Long Service Increment they will understand this anomaly, for others it was based on the total pot of LSI money (15 years service) that was then distributed to a wider group of members. The fact that within each service the total pot of LSI money varied (number of recipients x the value) and the number to which it was subsequently distributed also varied has resulted in different figures being paid across the country. The new service must attempt to standardize the payment for everyone who is eligible. In this first year, members will receive the payment as calculated previously. No proposals have been put to us but negotiations on this topic will have to start shortly.

Similar to CPD is the payment of Additional Responsibility Allowances. These are paid in 2 broad areas; 1) for work done that is considered to be in the rolemap above the individual members'. [responsibility] 2) to reward specialist skills [skills]. With a new structural plan in development it is likely that better account will be taken on the rolemaps when designing the activities in each post and so members should be working in a job with the correct rolemap. This should avoid the need for individuals to work outwith their rolemap and reduce the need to rely on ARA to address this.

The skills based ARA's are paid as reward to individuals who undertake such activities as water or line rescue. These payments vary across the country, with some receiving no ARA for the same skill as someone receiving a payment elsewhere. This variation in like for like work with a single employer is unsustainable. Discussions have taken place on this topic but as yet no proposals have been put to us. The Scottish Committee have been tasked with developing ideas around these two topics that we can then take back to the SLT at which point detailed negotiations can begin.

## **Pay Cycles**

The service have approached us in relation to the number of pay cycles currently in use in Scotland. Each service currently operates more than one 'pay run' and the new single service has identified bringing these together as a means of reducing costs. It has been suggested that using a single pay run offers significant savings. This would likely be a monthly pay cycle.

The new SFRS has a fixed budget, which means that anything spent must come out of that budget. Each pound spent either pays for wages or pays for something that is not wages. Any savings from the non-wages side protects the spending on wages. In other words by reducing running costs, the service can afford to pay people. This option could save the equivalent cost of employing 28 firefighters. We have asked for further details and cost figures. No detailed proposal has yet been made and no agreement has currently been reached.