



Fire Brigades Union Region 1

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All Members
Region 1
Scotland

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Comrades,

Members update

I am aware of some of the frustrations that are present around the moves that have taken place since the inception of the single service, by nature few of us like change. It is worth restating that it was a political decision supported by Labour, Conservative and the Scottish National Party within their manifesto's to move to a single fire and rescue service to try and prevent the worst of the cuts that we are witnessing in the south. You will be well aware the service is facing cuts of £45m over the first 3 years of its inception and that your union has been actively lobbying MSP's and Board members to oppose these cuts and explain just how this will affect the front line service. It is of course too early to pass judgement on whether the single service is a success or not but we can see from reports from England that the traditional approach of making savings from the frontline is currently devastating the FRS there.

The recent Board decision regarding controls has been a difficult issue for everyone, with no easy answer available. The union lobbied successfully to have the number increased from the original proposal of 2 emergency fire controls for Scotland to 3 which now includes one per service delivery area. The FBU control group and the Regional Committee put forward a case to the board to reconsider its decision, however the Board confirmed the decision to close 5 controls over the forthcoming years. As part of the negotiations we have successfully extended the enhanced Voluntary Severance Early Retirement package by a full year and are working with the service to ensure sufficient uniform posts are available for members wishing to relocate, retrain or be redeployed. We are discussing with members affected as to the next steps in the process and meetings with the affected members are now taking place which will discuss the options available to our members. All efforts are now being directed at what staffing model should be in place and the numbers of members required for the new setup along with ensuring the fair and equitable treatment of members that are in the areas which are programmed to close. Stephen Reid (works in the former Central area) has been nominated by the Regional Committee to be the FBU rep to sit on the group progressing these issues, Stephen can be contacted at: Stephen.Reid@fbu.org.uk

A new flexi officer's rota has been implemented since the autumn and whilst we had some issues over the final consultation with some members on this duty system, we have had few problems to deal with around the new rota its self. Given the concerns of the officer members we have agreed with management to continually monitor the

rota and have the ability to raise any issue, at any time, on any matter on behalf of the officer members. Chris McGlone has now been appointed as the Scottish Officers representative and can be contacted at: Chris.McGlone@fbu.org.uk

There are currently a number of topics being discussed relating to our officer members as the previous eight services all had varying policies regarding role maps, job descriptions and job sizing. A number of station managers have had their jobs changed and agreement has been reached that these posts will be re-assessed for job-size and the award backdated to the date of the changes. Other issues surround the comparison between one former service and another. We are currently in negotiation on this and related matters and hope to progress this in the short term. We have current legal opinion on this, which will assist officials in taking these issues forward.

As part of the agreed Working Together policy the union is involved in a large number of working groups to tackle the issues of standardisation or harmonisation. One of the issues that we are looking for members views is that of the pay frequency. The inherited pay runs amount to 20 in total which the service would like to reduce over a period of time. Your views are being sought through the branches reps as to what the preferences are, i.e. monthly or fortnightly and on what date. Any final proposals that arise from the working group will be subject of consultation with the members.

We are currently working with the service in an effort to meet the financial challenges in a way that we can all support. A priority of this work will be in reducing the amount of overtime across the operational departments to a maximum and in line with the principals contained in the NJC Grey book. The FBU have been engaged in this work and negotiations are proceeding that should secure reductions in overtime payments and by allowing redistribution of posts (but not the people) across Scotland. This should have minimal impact on existing arrangements and allow for additional firefighters where currently there is a shortage. Further information will be available shortly but this should assist in crewing of appliances and link to further work underway on a single response model based on providing safe crewing arrangements.

You will be aware of the new district structure for the internal organisation of the union in Scotland (Region 1), the nominations for the District Secretaries will commence immediately following the Regional AGM in March and each branch is encouraged to take part in the process and to hold a meeting and make a nomination. If we have more than one nomination then a ballot of the members will be held for the post. In the interim and until such time as we have concluded the district elections the nomination process for the post Regional Secretary, has been agreed by the EC to be put on hold. This will allow for the current post holder, John Duffy, who was elected in June 2010 for a 4 year period, to conduct these elections.

A working group is to be established to discuss additional responsibility allowances (ARA) and continual professional development (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.

Whilst negotiations have been difficult and conducted against a backdrop of a huge budget cut we have achieved a number of major successes: no compulsory redundancies, no fire station closures, no loss of any pumps, an increase from 2 to 3 for our emergency fire control, no change in station duty systems, min crewing of 4 for all RDS appliances, no cross border involvement during any industrial action by English members, an interim fitness policy, no dismissals for failing fitness, 2 recruits courses last year and one planned for this year, reduction in overtime to NJC level, a mobility clause and no transfer and matching policy for senior officers . Over and above the reform work that is currently underway the FBU is also involved in arrangements for the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow. The challenges are not insignificant however and we have a long way to go with a number of issues and it is vital that you use the branch structures and the new district structures to express your views and to contribute.

The FBU has a network of officials and reps that are carrying out reform work over and above the normal business of the union dealing with individual representations and support. I am grateful for their efforts and believe that all members should appreciate the huge effort that is currently underway on your behalf.

For those who wish to keep up to date and are familiar with modern methods, we have outlets on most social media, Twitter, Facebook and our own website, these can be found at:

Twitter	https://twitter.com/FBUScotland
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/roadtonablus
Scottish website	http://www.fbuscotland.org/

Yours fraternally



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