

Please see attached which can also be viewed on the FBU website.

Scottish Government Proposals

Negotiations with the General Secretary, Matt Wrack, to clarify the details of the proposals from the Scottish Government for firefighter pensions have concluded. The clarified proposals are now being sent to our members in Scotland to consider, by way of home address consultative ballot. The EC has made no recommendation due to the complex political and industrial circumstances involved and the implications and differing impacts that a recommendation could have on the four trade disputes registered in the UK.

It must be remembered that pensions are a partial devolved issue and that regardless of the outcome of our dispute, pensions will, once it becomes a regulation be the responsibility of the Scottish Government, subject to the constraints placed upon them by Whitehall.

The question Scottish members will be asked to decide in the consultative ballot is:

Are the proposals offered to Scottish firefighters by the Scottish Government sufficient to avoid calling strike action at this time?

The cover statement from the EC is a balanced and factual summary of the proposals and a brief explanation of the reasons for a consultative ballot of Scottish members being conducted.

It may be worth noting that:

- A YES vote would;
 - only be a vote in favour of the current proposals from the Scottish Government being sufficient to avoid calling strike action in Scotland at this particular time.
 - would not prevent, if approved by the EC, the potential of initiating a ballot for action short of strike in Scotland in pursuit of the unresolved issues in dispute (which the Scottish Government says they are constrained from addressing by the devolved arrangements with Westminster).
 - would not prevent the possibility of a separate ballot for strike action in the future if it is decided to be of tactical advantage at that time.
- A NO vote would;
 - confirm the proposals are insufficient to avoid strike action at this time
 - require the General Secretary to call a period of discontinuous strike action within the time limit set by the 56-day extension from the date of the lawful strike ballot mandate.
 - Commit the FBU to take strike action in Scotland by 23 October 2013

To date there have been no similar proposals made by either the Westminster or Welsh Governments.

Meetings are currently being arranged at short notice to allow a National official (Sean Starbuck), on behalf the Executive Council, to discuss the proposals and explain the position of the negotiations being undertaken by head office once these are agreed we would be grateful if you can make the appropriate arrangements as soon as possible and advertise as widely as you can.

If in any doubt, don't vote until you have heard the facts. Members are free to attend any meeting and are encouraged to do so.

Yours in Unity
Scottish regional Committee