



FIRE BRIGADES UNION

Scotland *Newsletter*

THE PROFESSIONAL VOICE OF YOUR FIREFIGHTERS

January 2021

Happy New Year to our members and families and welcome to the January 2021 edition of the FBU Scotland Newsletter. Many of you will be aware that 2020 was a hugely challenging year for FBU members and officials in Scotland, across the Region and beyond. The huge frustrations voiced by many of our members with the SFRS's pay proposal resulted in its rejection in late February and just a few weeks later the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in a significant impact on members and massive increases in FBU official's workloads, which continued throughout the year. On behalf of FBU officials across the Region we want to thank members, and especially branch officials, for their organisation, trust and unity throughout the year. It is both recognised and appreciated.

Regrettably, although unsurprisingly, 2021 is likely to be as, if not more, challenging for members and officials. In reality, front line fire cover has been consistently eroded year upon year through reductions in crewing

models and firefighter numbers, with some appliances left uncrewed and unavailable. Over recent years many further proposed cuts have been successfully challenged by the FBU, however members know that any reduction in resources, be that staff, or appliances, inevitably increases the risk to both firefighter and public safety - an outcome which is unacceptable to us all.

To maintain, and improve, terms & conditions, shift patterns, fire cover, and pay will not be the sole issue this year. Nationally and locally the challenges to protect our pension schemes and our member's health from the threat of contaminants will be in the spotlight. The FBU have achieved significant legal successes regarding the imposed changes on our pension schemes, ultimately the Westminster Government imposed discriminatory and therefore illegal changes in 2015 and only through the FBU's continued and ultimately successful legal challenge forced their hand to acknowledge this.

Much work remains to be done for an acceptable resolution to be agreed, and beyond that for a realistic pensionable retirement age to be achieved.

The FBU commissioned report into Toxic Fire Effluents from the University of Central Lancashire was published late last year and is the most significant piece of work undertaken regarding linking the contaminants produced from fires with cancer as an occupational injury. Members will all know of a current or former colleague who has been diagnosed with cancer, or other serious illness, far too many of whom will have subsequently lost their lives. In many countries presumptive legislation recognises certain cancers as occupational diseases amongst firefighters, this though is not the case in the UK. We must continue to ensure that serving members are properly protected from contaminants in their roles, whilst fighting to ensure that those who suffer from occupational diseases are compensated and provided for with 2021 being a significant year for this work.

Direct Debit

The Fire Brigades Union paid out nearly £150,000 nationally on administration fees to Fire and Rescue Services to process FBU Contributions on behalf of members! Switch your membership to Direct Debit now to avoid these unnecessary costs
www.fbu.org.uk/form/direct-debit-form

Don't forget that a comprehensive list of legal services are available to members and their families.

Information leaflets are available and details can be found on the legal services website



Contact the FBU Legal Service on

0808 100 6061

www.thompsonstradeunion.law/fbu

The significant impact of the Covid-19 pandemic looks set to continue through the majority, if not the entirety of this year. It is imperative that members are properly protected from the virus itself through appropriate PPE, health and safety measures and policy, whilst also continuing to carry out their core roles with the resources required to protect both the public and maintain firefighter safety. Mitigating the threat posed through the pandemic cannot be at the expense of cuts and reductions in firefighters and resources.

Finally, the Scottish Government elections in May of this year present an opportunity for all political parties to openly commit to adequately fund the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service, in order that resources are protected, and the long running issue of pay can finally and hopefully be properly resolved.

As the FBU has made clear from the start, we are committed to work to produce an offer which is acceptable to members and will continue to pursue this.

The Regional Committee recently met to discuss the area around pay for Firefighters in Scotland, which included discussions on the approach from the SFRS regarding discussions on an MTA response.

The regional committee were in full agreement that these discussions must be part of the wider discussions on broadening the role for pay and any approach to consider remuneration via ARA's will be strongly rejected. Members have been very clear that this approach would not be acceptable.

To support our pay campaign moving forward, we must all play a full role in lobbying both our current and prospective MSP's on these issues. Further updates will be sent out to members on this over the coming weeks.

In order to fight in the best interests of members and our profession on all of these issues it is imperative that our branches continue to be as well organised and represented as they currently are. All branch and sectional officials' positions must be filled and on wholtime stations and controls, each watch must have an FBU watch rep in place.

We also must continue to strive that all of our branches have 100% FBU membership levels and that we all continue to educate our new members and recruits on the importance of having a workforce that is properly unionised. It is only through the FBU that employee's interests can

be properly represented. Ultimately it is the branch membership who instructs Area/Sectional officials on which issues to prioritise and which positions to take. Through our branch/sectional structures, Area/Sectional officials are in place to serve the membership, unlike the employer our structure is not top down, but bottom up. Please continue to play a full part in your branch/sectional structure and where through retiral, transfer or otherwise branch/sectional positions become vacant consider stepping forward to fill them. The FBU provides full support, training and education to help you carry out your role.

KEEP UP TO DATE

With the latest news on the FBU Scotland website
www.fbuscotland.org

Twitter - @FBUScotland
 Facebook – Fire Brigades Union Scotland

Contact Us

**4th Floor,
 52 St Enoch Square
 Glasgow
 G1 4AA**

TEL – 0141 221 2309

E-mail – region01@fbu.org.uk



FIREFIGHTERS 100 LOTTERY

THE GOOD CAUSES

The Firefighters 100 Lottery Fund shall be administered appropriately by the Fire Brigades Union for the future benefit of all firefighters and their bereaved families in accordance with the following good cause criteria:

1. Family support and welfare: to provide longer-term support to the families of firefighters killed or seriously injured in the line of duty, including financial support such as individual bursaries to help towards the costs of further education, or grants towards the provision of specialist medical equipment, or support for inquests or similar processes.

2. Memorials and remembrance: to support, establish and maintain memorials and/or memorial events in remembrance of firefighters killed in the line of duty.

3. Protect, prevent and promote: to promote the lessons learnt from the deaths and serious injuries of firefighters so as to better protect

firefighters, the communities they serve and prevent deaths and injuries in the future.

4. Research: to support research into the physical and mental health and wellbeing of firefighters; the "all hazards" nature of the modern fire and rescue service role; and the prevention, protection and intervention work firefighters undertake to save lives in our communities.

5. Humanitarian assistance: to support humanitarian initiatives and appeals, including internationally, which are aimed at assisting those affected by fire or disaster and where there is a particular need for the support of skilled fire and rescue service intervention.

<https://www.firefighters100lottery.co.uk/support/firefighters/buytickets>

COVID-19 Update

Addressing the Current Situation In Respect Of Additional Covid-Related Activities

The Regional Secretary has written to the Chief Officer relaying the FBU's disappointment with the decision of the National Employers to end the national agreement for voluntary Covid related activities.

In spite of these recent developments and breakdown of the national agreement, the FBU in Scotland have continued to maintain a positive dialogue with SFRS. We believe there remains scope to make progress on agreement for voluntary Covid related duties. We will update members in Scotland as and when there are any further developments.

Covid Vaccinations

The FBU attend weekly Covid meetings with the Scottish Government and take the opportunity to raise any issues on behalf of our Members. At the most recent meeting, we raised the issue around Covid vaccinations specifically for those working within our operational fire control rooms. The FBU welcomed the change in decision by the Scottish government to allow vaccinations for colleagues working in the Scottish Ambulance Service control rooms which was due to the concerns being raised on the impact of potential outbreaks on the emergency services response.

The FBU echoed the same points for our control members

and the potential impact on emergency responses should an outbreak occur within operational fire control rooms. The Scottish government reiterated that they were adhering to the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) however, they have listened to the points the FBU made and will look at the situation again.

KEEP UP TO DATE WITH THE LATEST NEWS

Website

www.fbuscotland.org

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FBU Scotland - Officials

Listed below are the contact details for the Regional Committee which includes Area and Sectional Officials. Area Officials ensure the Branches/Sections, within their area, are kept up to date with all FBU business via communication and at regular Area Committee meetings with Area Branch/Sectional Reps. Sectional Officials also keep their respective sectional members up to date on FBU work. Any member queries/concerns should be raised via the Branch/Sectional Rep in the first instance. If your Branch/Section does not currently have Branch/Sectional Reps in position, please contact one of your Area Officials in the first instance (Branches should aim to have a minimum of three Branch Reps in place – Secretary, Chair and Health and Safety Rep). Any membership queries should be directed to the relevant Area Organiser.

The Regional Committee currently have vacant positions within the following Sections – Officer, RDS, LGBT and B&EMM. Area Officials have been liaising with Branches to fill these sectional positions as it's vital that all our sections have representation. We would welcome interest from members who are looking for further information, regarding these positions. Full FBU training, education and support will be given. Any members who are interested in these sectional posts should contact their Area/Sectional Official for further information.

EC Member - chris.mcglone@fbu.org.uk
Regional Secretary - denise.christie@fbu.org.uk
Regional Chair - brian.cameron@fbu.org.uk
Regional Treasurer - seona.hart@fbu.org.uk

North Area Secretary (Interim) – colin.brown@fbu.org.uk
North Area Chair (Interim) – simon.leroux@fbu.org.uk
North Area Vice Chair –
North Area Organiser (Interim) – scott.macrory@fbu.org.uk

West Area Secretary – john.malcolm@fbu.org.uk
West Area Chair – alex.muir@fbu.org.uk
West Area Vice Chair – jamie.mccallum@fbu.org.uk
West Area Organiser – ian.sim@fbu.org.uk
West Area 5th Official – angus.young@fbu.org.uk

East Area Secretary – john.mckenzie@fbu.org.uk
East Area Chair – gus.sproul@fbu.org.uk

East Area Vice Chair (Interim) – steve.weir@fbu.org.uk
East Area Organiser – davey.strachan@fbu.org.uk

Regional Health & Safety Rep - david.hart@fbu.org.uk
Regional Control Rep - donna.donachie@fbu.org.uk
Regional Women's Rep - rachel.rogers@fbu.org.uk
Regional Fairness at Work Rep - melanie.gibb@fbu.org.uk
Regional Education/Learning Rep - kim.ferguson@fbu.org.uk
Union Learning Fund Project Organiser - kim.ferguson@fbu.org.uk

FIRE BRIGADES UNION (SCOTLAND)

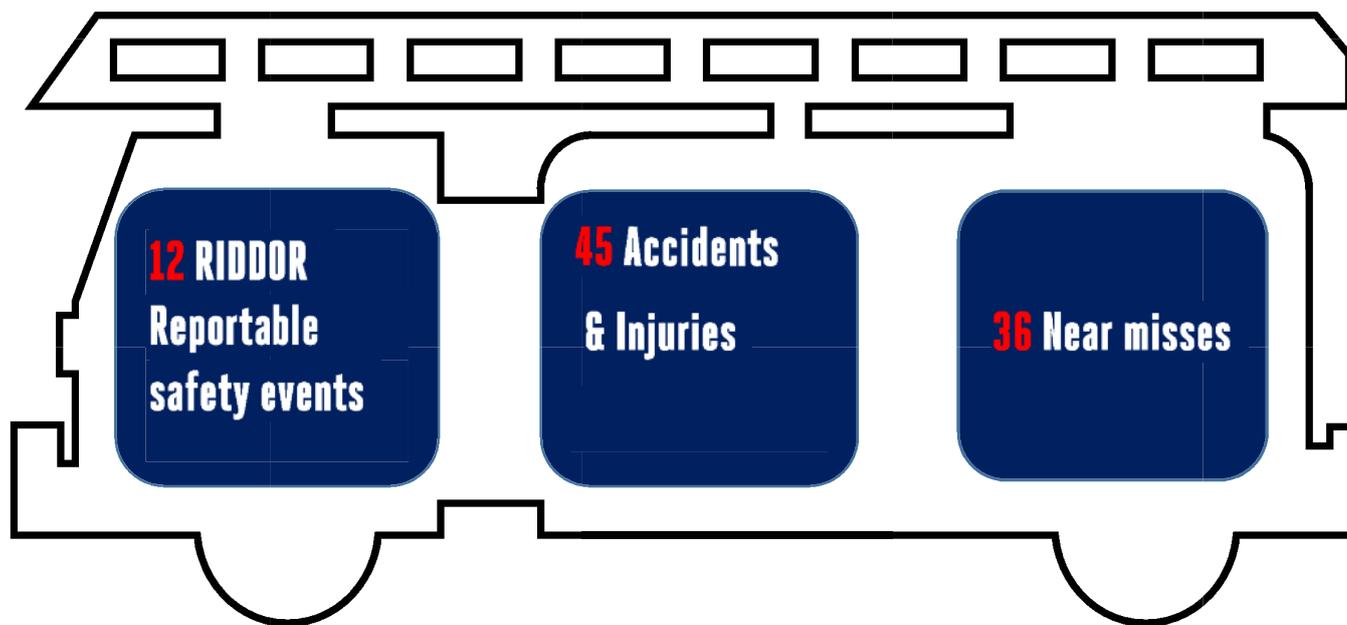
HEALTH & SAFETY BULLETIN

JANUARY 2021



Between July and September 2020, 25 Firefighters were injured during operational activities

FBU members within Scotland attended 22,780 operational incidents. 1 Firefighter was injured every 911 incidents.



Operational near misses accounted for 44% of all near misses

Training activities accounted for 10.2% of all near misses



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OF YOUR FIREFIGHTERS**

It is vitally important for our members' safety that all near misses and safety events continue to be reported