
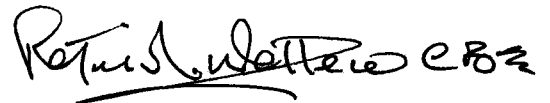


We are all clear that there is no intention of leaving Scottish firefighters in a situation where they face “no job, no pension”, and we agreed to work together in the development of the SFRS’s new relevant policies to see how we could best embody that approach.



Richard Dennis
Head, Fire and Rescue
On behalf of the Scottish Government



Pat Watters
Chair
on behalf of SFRS

Safer Communities Directorate
Fire and Rescue Division

T: 0131-244 2873
E: Richard.dennis@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Matt Wrack
General Secretary
The Fire Brigades Union
Bradley House
68 Coombe Road
Kingston Upon Thames
Surrey
KT2 7AE



4 September 2013

Dear Matt

BALLOT FOR INDUSTRIAL ACTION: PENSIONS IN THE FIRE SERVICE

Thank you for your letter of 29th August 2013 announcing the results of the ballot as to whether members of the FBU are prepared to take part in industrial action consisting of strike action.

We are both aware that the ballot remains valid for 4 weeks and that you must announce plans for strike dates within that period – except where both sides are agreed that active negotiations are in hand, when the legislation allows for an extension if agreed by both sides not exceeding eight weeks.

You will have seen Roseanna Cunningham's letter of 29th August, which we would hope would form a good basis for negotiations between us. We believe we have addressed those issues in the trades dispute that fall within the direct control of the Scottish Government and Scottish Fire Service, and on the other issues, we would of course move to match any resolution achieved with the UK Government and English employers.

We are therefore writing now of behalf of the Scottish employers' side to ask if you would be willing now to agree to such an extension to allow negotiations to continue in Scotland.

We met your colleagues Sean Starbuck and Roddy Robertson this morning for further discussions. On fitness standards, the SFRS were able to confirm current moves were only towards an interim standard, and that before a permanent policy for SFRS is adopted, we would of course take cognizance of work done elsewhere in the coming months. That interim policy, on which you will be fully consulted, is necessary to make sure we keep firefighters safe in the hazardous duties they face.