



# FIRE BRIGADES UNION

GENERAL SECRETARY : MATT WRACK

Established 1918

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Our Ref: MW/sll

13 October 2010

Bob Neill MP  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State  
Communities and Local Government  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London  
SW1E 5DU

Dear Minister

Following the announcement of the CLG project "Fire Futures" in July of this year, the Fire Brigades Union has taken its place on the project Steering Group. As a primary stakeholder organisation, the FBU waits to see what will emerge from the process.

For many decades the FBU has been instrumental in the development and implementation of change in the Fire and Rescue Service and has been a keen advocate and supporter of change where such change is in the interests of the Service, its members and public safety.

The FBU is becoming increasingly concerned with the proposals, either nascent or formally proposed, being considered by Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) in anticipation of cuts to funding resulting from the Comprehensive Spending Review and Local Government grant funding both to be announced later this autumn.

These changes include proposals to:

- close fire stations;
- reduce the numbers and availability of personnel including firefighters and officers responsible for delivering and coordinating service on the incident ground;
- issue redundancy notices to uniformed personnel;
- reduction in the number and availability of appliances.

You will have seen already our response to the Comprehensive Spending Review wherein we make clear that there is no logical case for reducing funding to the Fire and Rescue Service. We do not support the cuts agenda within the Fire and Rescue Service.

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It is even more illogical for Fire and Rescue Services to be left planning such changes which, if unchallenged, will result in the removal of the resources and reduction in the number of personnel which may be required to deliver and implement any changes (for example new roles and responsibilities) which might emerge from the Fire Futures project and the subsequent ministerial consideration.

Against this background, the Fire Brigades Union proposes a moratorium on changes to:

- Structure of Fire and Rescue Services.
- Disposition of fire appliances, fire stations, control rooms and departments.
- Future funding arrangements and reductions in Fire Service budgets.

This moratorium to continue at least until such time as the review of the Fire and Rescue Service being undertaken through the Fire Futures project, and the subsequent consideration by you, your Department, the primary stakeholder organisations and the wider Fire Rescue Service has taken place. We believe a call for such a moratorium from the Fire Minister would have a significant impact on decision making within the Service.

Yours sincerely



MATT WRACK  
GENERAL SECRETARY