

Date: Wednesday, 19 March 2008

## **ALL MEMBERS**

### **RECENT JOINT SECRETARIES AGREEMENTS**

Dear Brother/Sister,

Please find attached minutes of a recent joint secretaries meeting in which the FBU and management met within the joint secretariat to resolve, or progress a number of important issues. You will see from the minutes that there was a significant presence representing both parties with the meeting held in a neutral venue and with 16 items on the agenda there was significant movement or resolution on the vast majority of those issues discussed. The items on the agenda were as follows:

1. First Strike Team – The issues stems from the proposal to implement ship firefighting (not offshore ship firefighting, only inshore or alongside harbour) at Kirkdale with the agreed statement informing on progress on this matter.
2. CPD – Agreement was reached to produce and provide a joint statement on CPD for the fire authority meeting today's date. The statement was to be ready by the 6<sup>th</sup> March and that timeline was met. The report and results of those discussions at the fire authority meeting today will be the subject of a separate FBU All Members Circular.
3. Performance Appraisals System – members will be aware that there remain concerns about the use of Notes for Case and Personal Development Plans (PDP's) in relation to some Service managers and the statement referred back to agreement reached between the Union and the Service brokered at a NJC Conciliation meeting of June 2007. Instructions from the Service Training Manager will be issued to ensure all managers are aware of agreed procedures and policies with regard to Notes for Cases and PDP's.
4. W1 Retained Contracts – This issue still requires more work and was referred back for further discussions.
5. CPP – This agreed statement ensures all the Unions concerns with regard to safety are processed in an agreed and expeditious manner and prior to the CPP becoming operationally available at C2.
6. Transfer Protocol – It was agreed that the transfer protocol agreement between the FBU and the Service is reaffirmed locality managers will be given direction on the use of the agreed protocol.
7. IFE Examinations – the issue of re-instating some form of written examination in relation to the promotion procedures was discussed and it was agreed that negotiations will continue on this matter.

8. New Public Holiday Forms – members were contacting the FBU office with regard to new PH Leave application forms, it was agreed that any errors on the forms will be highlighted on return to the applicant rather than simply disregarding the application.
9. MACC – It was agreed that a further single status meeting will be convened to discuss the significantly and fully costed reports presented the Service by the FBU, all developments will be reported back as soon as possible.
10. Retained Resilience Working – A number of areas of concern in relation to retained resilience working was discussed with those discussions being constructive, both parties committed to the discussions continuing.
11. Industrial Relations Review – JMU Survey – The findings of the 2007 JMU Survey will require implementing along with the 2008 JMU Survey being undertaken to measure improvement or worsening of the situation.
12. and 13. – These two sections represent the agreed statement that will form the terms of reference for the upcoming NJC Joint Secretaries meeting scheduled for early April.
14. The FBU will continue to analyse and scrutinise any and all budget options for 2008/09, this scrutiny will be reported back to members on a regular basis.
15. The FBU has recently registered a dispute on the process for seeking an independent medical opinion in cases where there is a divergence of medical opinion between our members GP and the Services MO, with our members on occasion having their pay stopped. As a result of significant progress made on this issue, the Union has agreed to suspend the dispute pending further talks. Those talks are now concluded and resolution on this matter in the shape of collective agreement is imminent.
16. The local dispute on pre-arranged overtime working will be heard by the Consultation and Negotiation Panel on the 16<sup>th</sup> April 2008, the terms of reference are agreed and submitted, members will be informed of the outcome as soon as the decision is received by the Union.

You will hopefully see that the FBU is continually striving to protect our members conditions and in many areas working to improve them, this meeting was viewed by your elected officials as an important step in that ongoing process.

However, the FBU will continue that work to best protect and improve conditions, including ongoing work on CPD, reported in a further all members circular. Pay protection, retained working and pensions is another area that the FBU both locally and nationally are actively engaged in progressing both an dialogue and in legal action. Without the FBU all areas would not and could not be matters of debate, legal scrutiny and dispute resolution through discussions with the local and national employers.

Yours in unity

L Skarratts  
Brigade Secretary