

CFO McGuirk
Merseyside Fire Service
Service Headquarters
Bridle Road
Bootle
Merseyside
L30 4YD

Date: Tuesday, 15 August 2006

Reference: Letter to General Secretary - 11th August 2006.

Dear Mr. McGuirk,

Thank you for your letter dated 11th August 2006 directed to the General Secretary which I note you have copied me into.

Within your correspondence to the General Secretary you request certain exemptions from any potential industrial action at certain locations, yet you direct your request to Mr Wrack despite the fact that Mr Wrack has written to you previously reminding you that the current dispute is a local dispute between the Merseyside brigade committee and Merseyside Fire and Civil Defence Authority. You continue to enter into correspondence with certain national organisations yet you have not informed the locally elected FBU brigade officials, that you have requested external assistance regarding this dispute.

You have consistently disregarded any meaningful attempt at dispute resolution and have decided to enter into dialogue and correspondence with the national Union along with the Trades Union Council (TUC) without informing either myself or the brigade chair, Mr Dunne. You have continually interrogated the lawful ballot process with the Electoral Reform Service (ERS) without attempting to resolve the primary dispute in talks with the FBU local officials. You have offered contractual arrangements to members/employees to remunerate those prepared to work through any potential strike action without attempting to resolve the dispute itself and you have done so in a manner that clearly breaches the Grey Book, a matter now of further formal dispute between the FBU and MF&CDA.

Your request for certain exemptions at certain locations from any potential strike action has again circumvented the Merseyside brigade committee and as such the local FBU, an allegation I have levelled against you on numerous occasions.

Given the approach you have made along with your continual and unhelpful activities with regard to the current trade dispute, the Merseyside brigade committee feel strongly that any approach made to the Fire Brigades Union which circumvents the local brigade committee and its officials reinforce the position we have maintained which is that you are intent in circumventing the local Fire Brigades Union, given your recent actions it is our firm belief that dispute resolution is distant from your considerations at present.

The Merseyside brigade committee would have given the most thorough consideration to your request if your activities prior to your request would have led us to believe that you were genuine about resolving the current dispute and averting the likelihood of industrial action, which sadly is not the case.

Accordingly the Brigade Officials on behalf of the brigade committee will now make the strongest recommendation to the General Secretary that specifically due to your behaviour with regard to the trade dispute and activities that surround it, that any request from yourself for exemption from any potential industrial action is rejected.

Finally I would appreciate it if you would direct all correspondence regarding the current dispute to the locally elected officials in the first instance to allow proper consideration to those local issues. I can assure you that in the normal manner with regard to disputes that may lead to industrial action, the local FBU will keep the General Secretary and other national officials fully informed.

You may be aware that the local FBU officials have been invited to a further meeting with the elected members of MF&CDA which may be an opportunity at this late hour to resolve the current dispute, I suggest that your energy is now directed in that direction.

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

L Skarratts
Brigade Secretary

cc M Wrack
A Dark
R Winters
D Mills
W Gee
Elected Members
ACO