



**DEFEND CONTROL JOBS**  
AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL

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TO: ALL MEMBERS

Dear Brother/Sister

**EXPOSED - REGIONALISATION IS AN EXCUSE TO ATTACK PAY AND CONDITIONS FOR EMERGENCY FIRE CONTROL STAFF**

The FBU has been campaigning for a number of years against the proposals to regionalise Emergency Fire Controls in England. We have consistently exposed the failures of this project including the facts that it will not deliver the savings claimed and that it faces significant huge technical difficulties.

We now have confirmation regarding one of our further key concerns. We have argued that the project is being used as a means to attack the pay and conditions of Emergency Fire Control Staff. This is being done in the mistaken belief that technology can somehow replace the need for skilled and well-motivated employees.

Within the past week a press release has been issued by Derek Davis, Chair of Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority and (at least until now) a supporter of the project. This press release exposes the real agenda behind FireControl (the regionalisation project) at least within the West Midlands. Councillor Davis is to be commended for telling the truth to the public and to those who work within our Service.

The full text is produced below:

*"I have been astonished by what I have recently heard. High level meetings in the West Midlands region during the planning of the Regional Centre discussed promising decent pay and working conditions to lure highly skilled staff to the new regional centre.*

*"It has now been made clear that this is only a pretence until the centres are up and running. There would then be a major attack on pay and conditions, with talk of pay cuts of up to £10,000.*

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*"I am certain this will undermine public firefighter safety in Staffordshire and across the region. A problem that could be mirrored across the country.*

*"I have personally assured highly skilled emergency fire control personnel in Staffordshire that their pay and conditions are assured, if they move to the new centre in Wolverhampton. I was astonished therefore to find out that this may not occur and the opposite could happen as soon as the centres are up and running early next year.*

*"It is obvious that this project will not deliver the safer and better system it promised if we cannot take highly skilled and motivated staff with us and retain them. This appalling hidden agenda undermines both the project and the promises which have been made to our workforce.*

*"I have been a long-term supporter of this project and I cannot in all conscience go along with making promises which I have recently learned will be broken as soon as it is possible to do so.*

*"I will be discussing these issues with fire service personnel and my colleagues on the fire authority."*

Councillor Davis has blown the whistle by revealing the real agenda we face in relation to Control Regionalisation. The FBU has made an initial response by distributing a press release of its own which states:

*The Fire Brigades Union today reacted to yesterday's statement by Derek Davis, Chair of Staffordshire Fire Authority, that Government plans to merge Emergency Fire Control Rooms are nothing more than a multi-million pound smokescreen to slash employee pay irrespective of the effect this will have on safety.*

*Chris Wood, FBU Regional Official for the West Midlands, said: "I am appalled that elected members who make up the Regional Management Board are prepared to pretend to the public and Emergency Control Staff that everything is fine with the new project, when they know it is not true. In secret, they have decided to cut pay in the Emergency Control Centres by £10,000 a year. Quality of staff will plummet, and we will end up with a Call Centre instead of an Emergency Control Centre. This will put lives at risk."*

*FBU Assistant General Secretary Andy Dark added: "The Fire Brigades Union applauds Derek Davis for lifting the lid on what is being planned for Emergency Control Room Staff. It's a disgraceful attitude and displays utter contempt for the people that work tirelessly out of public view to ensure that the Fire and Rescue Service delivers to the public when they need it most.*

*"We believe that what Mr Davis has exposed may well be what is being planned across England.*

*"Our Control Room members are an integral part of the Fire Service team and deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. The Executive Council and our National Conference are meeting over the next couple of weeks. We shall be recommending the strongest possible action if Fire Authorities and these new companies fail to guarantee no redundancies or refuse to honour current pay, terms and conditions."*

Further, we have written to Sadiq Khan, the Fire Minister at CLG a copy of which is attached.

The Executive Council will discuss this matter next week and it will form the basis of a key debate at our Annual Conference in May. I am confident that every single member of the FBU will unite to defend the jobs, pay and conditions of our Control members in England.

Best wishes.

Yours fraternally

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andy Dark', with a stylized, cursive script.

**ANDY DARK**  
**ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY**

AD/sll