



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

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FIRE BRIGADES UNION
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CIRCULAR: 2009HOC0527MW

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TO: ALL MEMBERS

Dear Brother/Sister

OUR JOBS, CONDITIONS AND OUR SERVICE - UNDER ATTACK

In April this year, I outlined the threat to our Service from cuts driven by Central Government and the Audit Commission (Circular: 2009HOC0226MW). I outlined at the time that the main target identified for cuts was the front-line emergency response side of the Fire and Rescue Service. This has meant that it has been our members' jobs and conditions which have borne the brunt of attacks. This situation has produced a number of industrial disputes as FBU members have sought to protect front-line services and the jobs and conditions of our members.

Currently, FBU members are engaged in industrial action short of strike action in **Humberside, Essex and London**. Members are taking various forms of action, including bans on pre-arranged overtime and refusing to participate in non-contractual work. These disputes have all arisen as a result of attacks on our members' conditions of service or attacks on front-line services from the local employer.

In **Merseyside**, we have registered a trade dispute as a result of the sacking of an FBU official which the Brigade Committee and local members strongly believe to be a case of victimisation. A ballot for strike action is due to commence next week.

Our members in **South Yorkshire** face an extremely serious attack. As I outlined in June (Circular: 2009HOC0395MW), our members have been notified that all employees working the shift duty system on fire stations will have their contracts of employment terminated on 1st January 2010. They will be able to be re-employed but on new and imposed contracts of employment. The employer has adopted this tactic as a way of enforcing shift changes without agreement and as a way of avoiding negotiating a settlement.

Following extensive consultation, our members have voted to register a further trade dispute and to ballot for strike action. This ballot will also commence next week.

I attended a number of meetings in South Yorkshire this week where I assured members that they would have full support from FBU members across the UK who will be appalled that an employer in our Service can behave in this way. South Yorkshire officials are already making contact with officials elsewhere to build such support.

You can hear the concerns of South Yorkshire members as well as details of our other campaigns through FBU-Tube:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/fbutube>

I know that your local officials will be making contact with Merseyside and South Yorkshire officials and I urge all members to provide whatever support is necessary.

Further information will follow as necessary.

Best wishes.

Yours fraternally

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. Wrack". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

MATT WRACK
GENERAL SECRETARY

MW/sll