

# THE FIRE BRIGADES UNION

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## SUSPENDED MERSEYSIDE FIREFIGHTER DID NOT MAKE PHONE CALLS

The Fire Brigades Union says a firefighter suspended by the fire authority and accused of making a number of phone calls to strikebreakers was wrongly accused. The union now understands the individual who did make the phone calls - and who has no connection to the fire and rescue service - has come forward.

A national spokesman for the FBU said: "The firefighter who was suspended by the fire authority was wrongly accused. Another individual with no connection to the fire and rescue service has come forward and has admitted making the phone calls which have been the subject of a complaint.

"The fire authority suspended their employee an hour before he went on strike and would not have been at work in any event. In addition, they publicly announced the suspension had taken place when there was no obligation or reason to do this.

"Making the suspension public made it part of a public relations campaign used to attack those on strike. It also placed the individual suspended firefighter in the middle of a media circus surrounding the dispute and the suspension.

"In our view it was entirely unacceptable for the fire authority to make the suspension public and to use it in the way they have done. That is not a criticism of the newspapers or broadcasters but of those who have used them as part of their public relations campaign in this dispute.

"We also make clear there is no criticism of the police for the way they have conducted this investigation. The authority is now left with egg all over its face for the way they have handled this.

"As employers they have behaved in a disgraceful manner and put an individual under the spotlight and under enormous strain. We expect them to make a public apology and to lift the suspension immediately."

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