

# FIRE BRIGADES UNION

23 April 2009

## SOUTH YORKSHIRE FIRE CREWS SET TO ANNOUNCE RESULT OF INDUSTRIAL ACTION BALLOT ON 24 APRIL

South Yorkshire fire crews are set to announce the result of their industrial action ballot on the afternoon of Friday 24 April. Industrial action short of a strike, will be possible from early May.

The ballot is in opposition to fire authority plans to impose longer day shifts of 12 hours, along with changes to start and finish times. Firefighters say the changes would damage family life and cause problems with childcare.

The ballot result will be announced no earlier than 2pm on Friday 24 April, after the legal requirements have been fulfilled.

Jerry Pagan, South Yorkshire FBU, said: "Firefighters with children will be forced to start at 8 in the morning and finish at 8 at night. That extends our days, but it also extends the day for our children to as much as 13 hours in childcare.

"Existing childcare arrangements will be disrupted and new arrangements will have to be found. Before and after school clubs can't fill the gap, and there is little formal childcare available at weekends or school holidays when firefighters are working as normal.

"These plans have been repeatedly rejected at fire station meetings and in two separate surveys. We have been telling the fire authority for nearly six months that there is very strong opposition.

"The fire authority has chosen to ignore us and their workforce and want to impose the changes. This is an aggressive move, it has gone down very badly with firefighters, and left no option other than to ballot.

"We will continue to seek a fair and reasonable agreement acceptable to the fire authority and to South Yorkshire firefighters. But fire crews will not accept imposition and the fire authority needs to wake up to that fact very quickly."

Those fire crews who work shifts do so in 48 hour blocks of two 9 hour day shifts (9am to 6pm) followed by two 15 hour night shifts (6pm to 9am). The proposals would introduce 12 hours day working and 12 hours night working.

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