

FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES National Employers

**To: Chief Fire Officers
Chief Executives/Clerks to Fire Authorities
Chairs of Fire Authorities
Directors of Human Resources**

Members of the Employers' Side of the NJC

14 June 2011

CIRCULAR EMP/07/11

Dear Sir/Madam,

PAY CLAIM 2011 – EMPLOYERS' RESPONSE

1. Authorities were advised in circular EMP/6/11 that we had received notification of a pay claim from the Employees' Side of the NJC and that it would be considered when the Employers' Side met today.
2. The claim sought "a rise in all NJC rates of pay equal to the percentage increase in inflation as identified by the Retail Price Index (RPI) for June 2011." That figure, in reality the May RPI figure, was released today and is 5.2%
3. I write to advise you that the Employers' response at today's National Joint Council meeting was as follows:

"Affordability and sustainability remain key issues for the Employers. You will be aware of the severe financial pressures facing authorities, the expectation of public sector pay restraint, and that expenditure must reduce.

Members of the Employers' Side have carefully considered the claim for a pay award this year in that context and have concluded they are not in a position to be able to make an offer.

As I have said, this decision has been taken in the light of the extremely serious financial position authorities have to deal with.

Whilst these circumstances are likely to continue for some time yet we also recognise that the current economic climate is placing pressure on the living standards of fire service employees and that this would be the second year without application of a national pay award.

With all this in mind the Employers' Side believes it would be helpful and constructive to undertake discussion at Joint Secretary level to see if it could be possible to justify a different position in 2012."

4. A copy of the press release issued today is attached.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Gittins', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Gill Gittins
Principal Negotiating Officer

Fire trade union pay claim of 5.2% unacceptable in present economic climate

Responding to the trade union pay claim of a rise on all NJC rates of pay equal to the percentage increase in inflation as identified by the Retail Prices Index announced in June 2011, Cllr Maurice Heaster, Chairman of the Employers' Side of the National Joint Council, the joint employer and union body, which determines pay and conditions of employment for uniformed fire service staff, including firefighters said: -

“The Employers recognise that many employees have been affected by the economic downturn. However, the Employers face a stark choice; they want to protect the fire and rescue service and offering a national pay increase at this time would severely compromise that aim.

“The Employers' Side has had to take a very firm approach in response to this claim and is mindful of the financial pressure on authorities, the expectation of public sector pay restraint, and that expenditure must reduce. “

Ends.