

FIRE BRIGADES UNION

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LINCOLNSHIRE FIREFIGHTERS FORCED TO WORK EXCESSIVE HOURS

Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) backed by Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) says it will sack 112 wholetime firefighters and only re-employ those who agree to work a new shift system. The move affects the 6 Lincolnshire fire stations with wholetime firefighters who will all face the sack on 1 February 2010.

The Fire Brigades Union in Lincolnshire will not agree to the new shift system which requires firefighters to be on duty for up to 108 hours without a break. Firefighters who work at the stations currently designated as day crewed would have to live close to the stations to respond to alerters outside of the positive working week of 42 hours.

Chris Hides Lincolnshire FBU brigade chair says “there has been no meaningful consultation on how this shift system affects our members. The FBU believes the shift system is not family friendly and is discriminatory against females.”

“The European Union has recently judged that there is to be a reduction in the working week for junior doctors from 56 hours to 48 hours. The general trend in most industries is a reduction in working hours, but Fire and Rescue Services are doing the opposite”

“This is a shameful display of bullying by the Chief Fire Officer (CFO), Mike Thomas, due to him not being able to reach an agreement on a new shift system, he intends to sack all 112 wholetime firefighters and only re-employ those who agree to work the new shift system. In an irresponsible exhibition of cutting of your nose to spite your face, in order to impose the new shift system the CFO will have to remove the retained cover our members currently provide on a voluntary basis as part of the Day Crewed Shift System to meet the requirements of the Working Time Regulations.”

“This is directly opposite to what the CFO is required to achieve as part of his and the County Council’s plan for a safer Lincolnshire.”

“The loss of wholetime firefighters partaking in retained duties at day crewed stations will result in LFRS forcing the retained staff, who are already stretched, to cover more hours per week in contravention of the Working Time Regulations.”

Ends

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