



**FIRE BRIGADES UNION**

**General Secretary: Matt Wrack**

Bradley House, 68 Coombe Road,  
Kingston upon Thames, Surrey, KT2 7AE

Telephone:  
Facsimile:  
E-Mail :

020-8541 1765  
020-8546 5187  
office@fbu.org.uk



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**TO: ALL MEMBERS**

9 September 2011

Dear Brother / Sister

**HANDS OFF OUR PENSIONS - OPT OUT ENQUIRIES**

Over the last few weeks as branch/watch meetings have continued, officials have reported being informed by members that there has been a significant increase in people considering their future in the pension schemes. Head Office has also received calls from members and officials who have indicated that they, and fellow members, are contacting their local Fire Service Pension administrator in large numbers to enquire about the process for this to be enacted.

I am also aware that at least one brigade has surveyed its staff to ascertain the numbers of potential opt outs and that the figures for those considering this option are alarmingly high.

Whilst it is sensible that all members plan for their future and consider all the options available to them it must also be stressed that at this moment in time the pension schemes remain unchanged and that the arrangements for future scheme proposals are completely unresolved. For example, there is still no firm proposal for any future accrual rates, information which is vital when considering the future value of a pension.

The FBU remains opposed to all detrimental changes to the fire pension schemes. We have significant evidence to present during these discussions which to date are far from complete.

Although the coalition government's proposals for working longer, paying more and getting less remain unaltered, so does our position, and members are strongly advised not to rush into any decision on opting out or not joining until all negotiations have been concluded and all the details are available.

This circular is not intended to deter members from making any enquiries about their future pension commitments but urges people not to rush into any decision until they have all the facts and figures about any future proposals available. It is important that any such important financial decision is based on access to full and accurate information.

The FBU will continue to take part in all the scheduled consultation meetings and will keep members informed of any developments through the usual channels. It is extremely important that you keep up with these developments and make every effort to attend your branch meetings.

Best wishes.

Yours fraternally

**MATT WRACK  
GENERAL SECRETARY**

MW/jh