

**Westminster
government calls for
cuts of at least 25%**



There is an alternative

South Wales members are resisting attempts by management to cut firefighter posts at several stations by introducing a new shift system. In August, a magnificent turnout of over 700 firefighters attended an FBU members' meeting in London to campaign against imposed changes in shifts and contracts. Two days later a further 400 attended a second meeting.

We have already successfully defended fire stations from Tayside to Warwickshire, from Cheshire to East Sussex. In South Yorkshire we stopped the tearing up of contracts and imposed shift changes.

What you can do

- Discuss the issues with FBU members at the station
- Ensure your branch discusses this bulletin and resolves to get involved.
- Take our message out to the local labour movement and the community.
- Write to your local newspaper
- Lobby your local councillors
- Write to your MP
- Get involved in organised local initiatives that challenge the cuts agenda

**Come to the FBU lobby of parliament
on Wednesday 17 November to say:**

**“We won't let our fire and rescue
service be destroyed”**

www.fbu.org.uk



10,000 FIREFIGHTER JOBS UNDER THREAT

**The FBU is organising a national lobby
and rally of parliament on Wednesday
17 November.**

**Come and tell MPs –
“Public safety first – No cuts in the fire
and rescue service”**

Please make sure your branch is represented

10 reasons to support the lobby and rally on 17 November

- 1. Jobs:** The government has proposed 25-40% spending cuts that would devastate our service. FBU analysis of fire service budgets suggests that 10,000 fire service jobs may be at risk. Cuts on this scale are complete lunacy and would dramatically undermine the efficiency, safety and effectiveness of the fire and rescue service. Come to parliament to demand that MPs listen to our professional concerns.
- 2. Pensions:** Despite a new firefighters' pension scheme in 2006 and other changes, this government has a clear agenda to attack our pensions again. Although its Hutton review has not yet reported, no doubt they will want us to pay in more, yet receive less. Come to parliament and tell MPs: Hands off our pensions!
- 3. Pay:** The government wants to see public sector pay frozen for 2011 and 2012. The government has no direct control over fire service pay. Nevertheless our employers have provocatively declared that they are unable to make a pay offer for 2010. This is despite the fact that many fire authorities had already budgeted for a pay increase for this year. No pay freeze.
- 4. Firefighter safety:** The FBU has highlighted the alarming upward trend in firefighter deaths at work, especially at fires. In order to respond safely and effectively to emergencies we need adequate resources – people, appliances, equipment and support systems. Further cuts can only further undermine safety.
- 5. Regional controls:** Despite promises made by the Tories and the Liberal Democrats before the general election, the new government has refused to scrap the failed project to regionalise our emergency fire controls. The FBU says this project has already wasted public money. This project has already failed. Tell MPs it's time to bury it once and for all.
- 6. Terms and condition under attack:** We have already seen numerous attacks on local conditions of service over the past seven years. Local employers have used 'modernisation' as the excuse to attack local agreements and to alter shift systems – all as a means to make further cuts. The new cuts agenda from Westminster will make these attacks worse. We need to challenge the entire agenda.
- 7. Privatisation:** Over many years services like cleaning and catering have been contracted out. Now we have fire stations built under the discredited PFI system and appliances privatised and leased back to the service. The London Fire Brigade has signed a contract with AssetCo to provide private 'emergency fire crew' in the event of industrial action. Make no mistake, greedy firms are waiting for every opportunity to grab more and more of our service. Tell MPs: No to privatisation.
- 8. Fragmentation of our service:** Under the 'modernisation' agenda we have seen numerous national standards abolished. The new Westminster government plans to take this further with their 'localism' agenda. To carry out cross border and major operations safely and effectively we need common standards, training and procedures. Oppose the further fragmentation of our profession.
- 9. Response times:** The cuts in our service have already resulted in slower attendance times. Between 1996 and 2006 response times to dwelling fires slowed by 18%. This is a national disgrace. The FBU has consistently argued that emergency response times are an essential indicator of the effectiveness of our service. Tell MPs we need new national standards for response times.
- 10. Public safety:** The entire cuts agenda unleashed by the government threatens the safety of the public. Cuts on the scale they are seeking would lead to fewer firefighters able to provide the essential service we deliver. We have already faced years of cut backs. Demand MPs think again – defend our fire and rescue service – no more cuts.



10 reasons to join the fightback to defend our service