Matt Wrack General Secretary

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To: Brigade Secretaries

Dear Brother/ Sister

ELIGIBILITY TO JOIN THE FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION SCHEMES

Please find attached a new factsheet that has been prepared by the Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) (England) in response to concerns raised by the FBU in relation to potential breaches around eligibility of membership of the firefighters' pension scheme.

This issue relates to a situation whereby an individual or individuals may have been granted membership of the firefighters' pension scheme in breach of the scheme rules on eligibility. This situation is being investigated further and the FBU will be writing to the local pension board involved to follow this up.

The FBU had raised this previously with the Scheme Advisory Board and it was accepted that the guidance included in Firefighters Pension Scheme Circular 2007 was clear that membership of the firefighters pension scheme was restricted.

'*to those whose role on joining the Fire and Rescue Service is that of firefighter, crew manager or watch manager but it is essential that the person's duties include attendance at incident in a firefighting role. Any person who joins the Service in any more senior role is not eligible to join the NFPS. The LGPS would be the appropriate pension scheme for them to join.*

(FPSC 2007 is also attached for your information)

The board had previously agreed that no guidance was needed as the regulations were clear that the person needed to have been employed as a 'firefighter' and that the regulations provided an interpretation of 'firefighter'.

This factsheet provides a supporting note of eligibility to the Firefighters' Pension Schemes, it does not consider which scheme a person may be entitled to join, i.e. whether they have full protection or tapered protection.

The Scheme Advisory Board note on eligibility has been sent to a significant distribution list in England including Chief Fire Officers and Local Pension Board Chairs and advisors with a clear request for an assurance that the rules on eligibility outlined are being applied correctly.

Action needed
It is very important that every local pension board follows this up. Please ensure that the FBU representative on your local pension board raises this issue and gets a written assurance that only those eligible as defined in these documents are, and have been, allowed to join the firefighters' pension scheme.

Where this is not the case please inform me immediately.

Yours in Unity,

SEAN STARBUCK
National Officer

SS/jr