

The Fire Brigades Union



# Facing reality – the need for a fully-funded fire and rescue service

FBU submission to the Spending  
Review 2013 and initial response  
to Ken Knight's review  
*June 2013*

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# Introduction

## Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary

A central issue for people living and working across the UK are the **risks** from fire and other emergencies, matters that the fire and rescue service deals with twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. The risks from fires at home, at work, as well as road traffic incidents, floods, from terrorism and a host of other things firefighters tackle every day have not reduced – in many cases they have increased.

Firefighters can tell politicians about the way we've dealt with significant risks in recent years, including the 7/7 attacks, the Olympics, huge fires and explosions, car crashes and much more. Firefighters dealt with almost double the flood incidents in 2012 than in 2011, but the current legislative arrangements for England and Wales do not even require the service to respond to floods.



### Spending Review

Ministers talk about "demand" and "supply", but fire and rescue emergency cover is not simply a matter of crude market forces. What matters are the **risks**, and whilst these change over time, there needs to be adequate fire cover for the spikes of intensive activity, as well as for routine cover.

It takes the same number of firefighters and fire engines to safely and efficiently extinguish a house fire whether a town has ten house fires per week or one per month. Fire and rescue service "supply" cannot simply be scaled up or down in response to "demand".

The public and the government expect fire and rescue services to be in a state of readiness to respond quickly and efficiently to all types of emergencies whenever and wherever they may occur. The fire and rescue service can mobilise 10,000 trained professionals in a matter of minutes for any emergency.

The government ignores the fact that it is the activities of **firefighters**, through our professional experience and face-to-face community safety work with vulnerable people, with schools and through the NHS that has driven down fires and fire deaths across the UK. That prevention work would be reduced by further cuts, which would directly hurt the public we serve.

The government also ignores the impact of cuts on **response times**. When people call us, they expect the right number of firefighters and fire engines to make an intervention in the quickest possible time. People expect and deserve the necessary and timely response to deal with their emergency when it happens to them; they do not expect a slower and/or reduced capability response based on how often emergencies have happened to others. Cuts put lives at stake. Cuts also increase the risk of damage to homes, businesses and the environment.

### Efficiencies Review

Ken Knight's so-called "efficiencies" report is just a fig leaf for slashing our fire and rescue service to bits. David Cameron has promised to protect **frontline services**. That has been exposed as an utterly empty promise over the past three years, as the fire service has faced the biggest cuts in its history.

It is not just the Fire Brigades Union warning about this. Increasingly others in the fire service, including chief officers, are concerned over our ability to deliver this essential service. Fire stations are being closed and fire engines are being axed. Last year alone a further 1,200 firefighter **jobs** were cut.



All these cuts mean a poorer service for the public. Cuts mean waiting longer for a fire engine if you have a fire or other emergency and they mean waiting longer for the follow-up arrival of the right number of firefighters and fire engines needed to deal efficiently with your emergency once it has occurred.

All these basic facts are buried in order to justify further cuts in the government's spending review. The FBU reject arguments to chop up and sell-off fire and rescue services so that **privateers** can squeeze more profits from public services.

The spending review will impact directly on fire and rescue services in England. In Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland there are different funding mechanisms. Nevertheless these have already been affected by reductions in block grants, meaning that cuts are still threatened in all parts of the UK.

The FBU believes that our risk-reducing and life-saving, emergency response service needs to be **protected** across the UK.



**Matt Wrack**  
General secretary

# 1) Trends in recent years

The core argument made by ministers and by Ken Knight in his *Facing the Future* report<sup>1</sup> is that the downward trend in fires and fire deaths over the last decade justifies making further cuts to the fire and rescue service.

The Fire Brigades Union rejects this conclusion, not least because these trends indicate the success with which firefighters have carried out our work.

Firefighters have been the active agent in bringing about this progress, although there is still a long way to go. It would be irresponsible to decimate precisely the active force that has catalysed these improvements. Such folly will put lives at risk.

## Incidents attended

There are longstanding real trends that indicate the fire and rescue service in the UK has much to be proud of. The service is a real success story when it has the personnel and the resources to do the job. Over the last decade the fire and rescue service has added to its celebrated reputation.

Figures from *Fire Statistics Great Britain*<sup>2</sup> show:

- Total fires rose from 138,700 in 1981/82 to a peak of 221,500 in 2001/02. There were 104,900 fires in 2011/12. This represents a 53% fall i.e. more than **halved** in the last decade or so.
- Dwelling fires rose from 55,300 in 1981/82 to a peak of 71,100 in 1999/00. There were 43,500 dwelling fires in 2011/12. This represents a 39% decrease i.e. more than **a third** fewer in the last decade or so.
- Road vehicle fires rose from 34,500 in 1981/82 to a peak of 99,700 in 2001/02. There were 28,000 road vehicle fires in 2011/12. This represents a 72% decrease i.e. almost **three-quarters** fewer in the last decade or so.

Firefighters attended a total of 223,000 fires (primary + secondary + chimney) in 2011-12 in England, around half (48%) the incidents recorded in 2001-02. Fire false alarms stood at 249,000 last year, around a third (37%) less than in 2001-02, while non-fire incidents stood at 133,000, down 19%. Overall incidents counted in this fashion were down 39% compared with a decade ago.<sup>4</sup>

## Fire deaths

The reduction in fire deaths is also hugely encouraging.<sup>5</sup> Total fire deaths rose from 937 in 1981/82 to a peak of 967 in 1985/86. There were 380 fire deaths in 2011/12. This represents a 61% decrease i.e. more than halved in the last 25 years or so, and a 31% decrease i.e. nearly **one-third** since the turn of the century.

Dwelling fire deaths peaked at 745 in 1981/82. They were 461 in 2000/01. There were 287 dwelling fire deaths in 2011/12. This represents a 61% decrease i.e. more than halved in the last 30 years and a 38% decrease i.e. more than one-third since the turn of the century. The number of fatalities in road vehicle fires rose from 66 in 1981/82 to a peak of 109 in 1989/90. There were 37 deaths from road vehicle fires in 2011/12. This represents a 66% decrease i.e. two-thirds fewer in the last 25 years.

What these figures on fires and fire deaths show is that there are longstanding improvements, some of which predate so-called "modernisation", the shift of emphasis from emergency intervention to fire safety and prevention. But explaining why these improvements have taken place and what this implies for fire service funding is an entirely different matter.

The improving statistics are interpreted by too many people as showing a 'reduction in demand' for the fire and rescue service. But it is the role of the fire and

<sup>1</sup> Ken Knight, *Facing the future: findings from the review of efficiencies and operations in fire and rescue authorities in England*, 17 May 2013 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/facing-the-future>

<sup>2</sup> DCLG, *Fire Statistics Great Britain 2011 to 2012*, 13 December 2012 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-statistics-great-britain-2011-to-2012>

<sup>3</sup> *The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 defines provision for attending road traffic accidents as a core function of fire and rescue authorities. Therefore as well as road vehicle fires, firefighters also attend non-fire road traffic incidents – almost the same number as road vehicle fires (28,300 in 2012-13 according to DCLG's, Fire Service Monitor, April 2011 to March 2012 p.15). Attendance at these incidents has fallen by around a third over the last decade.*

<sup>4</sup> DCLG, *Fire Service Monitor, April 2011 to March 2012 p.13* [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/6959/2172323.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6959/2172323.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> DCLG, *Fire Statistics Great Britain 2011 to 2012*, 13 December 2012

rescue service to reduce the number of fires and emergencies where possible and to reduce their impact if they do happen. The 'product' of a fire and rescue service is safer communities. The improving statistics show that the fire and rescue service is more productive than it has ever been in the past. There is no sense in making cuts to a productive industry.

## Why the improvements?

Ken Knight's review recognises that these improvements are partly the result of **social changes** and technological improvements, but elides the reasons for those changes. For example, the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 (amended 1989 and 1993) were designed to ensure that upholstery components and composites used for furniture supplied in the UK meet specified ignition resistance levels. These regulations were strongly promoted by the FBU, some chief officers and Labour MPs, particularly after the deaths of 10 people in the Woolworth's fire in Manchester in May 1979. This was often in the teeth of opposition from Conservative government ministers and from industry lobbying bodies at the time.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, the FBU long championed improvements to Building Regulations. These examples make the case for regulation (as opposed to leaving it to the market) and show the important role played by firefighters and our union in improving public safety over many years.

There are other trends that have made an impact. Although cigarette smoking has halved over the last four decades (from 45% in 1974 to 20% in 2011), the number of cigarettes smoked by men and women has changed little since the early 1980s.<sup>7</sup> For many years, the FBU has strongly backed the introduction of fire-safer cigarettes.

The FBU also believes that the **prevention work** carried out by firefighters has made an important contribution, an argument made by both Ken Knight and the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA).<sup>8</sup> In 2011-12 fire and rescue authorities in England

undertook 770,000 home fire safety checks, up from around 500,000 in 2006-07. Total personnel hours spent on community fire safety activities in England (excluding London) rose from 600,000 in 2001-02 to over 1,000,000 in 2006-07. However in the context of cuts to the service since then (and a more targeted approach on high-risk people), this work reduced to around 600,000 hours by 2011-12.<sup>9</sup>

It was FBU representatives who pioneered the **LIFE projects** and other efforts to engage with different sectors of the community, particularly with disaffected youth who turned their ire on society towards attacks on firefighters (who appeared to represent uniformed authority figures stopping their behaviour).

Clearly, further attempts to cut back the service will impact on this vital prevention work. But the limits of this work are also in evidence. It is well known that in 1988, only 8% of households had a **smoke alarm** and that by 2008, it was 86%. Less well known is that in dwelling fires where a smoke alarm was present, 39% of battery-powered smoke alarms failed to operate and some 27% of alarms in 2011-12 overall failed.<sup>10</sup> Similarly, the Fire Protection Association estimates that more than 95% of all fire alarm signals from automatic fire alarm systems are unwanted or false.

The conclusion that should be drawn from these figures is that however important prevention work is, it cannot directly replace emergency intervention without leaving people and property at risk. Smoke alarms and sprinklers do not rescue people, they do not extinguish fires completely and they do not stop fire spreading to surrounding properties. For these irreplaceable matters, firefighters are necessary.

## What the figures don't show

One significant problem with trying to draw conclusions from trends in fires and fire deaths is that the official figures do not quantify an awful lot that needs to be measured. For example DCLG's *Fire Statistics Great Britain 2011 to 2012* states that the fire

<sup>6</sup> FBU, *Firefighter magazine* January 1988; September 1988; May 2011

<sup>7</sup> ONS, *General Lifestyle Survey 2011*, 7 March 2013

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/gls/general-lifestyle-survey/2011/index.html>

<sup>8</sup> Knight 2013 p.12; CFOA, *Fire and Rescue Service Spending Review Submission 2015/16*, 2013 p.19

<sup>9</sup> DCLG, *Fire and rescue service operational statistics bulletin for England 2011 to 2012*, 13 September 2012

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-and-rescue-authorities-in-england-operational-statistics-bulletin-for-2011-to-2012>

<sup>10</sup> DCLG, *Fire statistics Great Britain 2011 to 2012*, 13 December 2012

and rescue service attends approximately one-fifth of all **domestic fires**, because the majority are put out by someone else, so the service is not called.<sup>11</sup> Similarly, Department for Transport figures suggest that annually there are over 200,000 casualties on British roads and around 2,000 road deaths. Although trends are down in both cases, it is clear that fire and rescue service figures are part of much wider changes. Firefighters also complain that some fatalities as a consequence of fire are not always counted as fire deaths in certain circumstances, depending on the cause of the fire or the eventual cause of death recorded for the victim.

A good example is the widespread civil disturbances across a range of places in August 2011. If DCLG's *Fire Statistics Great Britain* report was used for reference, then the range of fires started during that period barely register. However subsequent work by DCLG has shown that the work of the fire and rescue service deserves to be recognised. DCLG's *Fire Service Monitor* states that: "Numbers of outdoor fires (e.g. rubbish or bin fires) are likely to be **underestimates**. This is because in some cases fire crews attended to these one after another, and so a single incident record may reflect multiple smaller fires." Similarly, the main official figures do not capture the geographical area subject to deliberate fire damage.<sup>12</sup> The widespread praise for firefighters during that period needs to be matched by recognition that the work done has not been adequately represented in the figures.

The last decade has also seen a huge number of high profile emergencies where firefighters work has not been reflected in these downward trends. No one will forget the **terrorist attacks** in London on 7 July 2005, when 52 people were killed by bus and tube bombers. Firefighters helped rescue 700 injured people and led hundreds of victims to safety on that terrible day.<sup>13</sup> Similarly, the Buncefield oil storage terminal **explosion** in December 2005 caused widespread damage and left 43 people injured. More than one thousand firefighters attended the blaze from 33 fire and rescue services across the country, working together as one team in extremely arduous and hazardous conditions to put the fire out and limit the effects on the

environment.<sup>14</sup> It is notable that the number of COMAH sites has remained around the same level (350) since Buncefield.

The essential problem with the official figures is that fires are quantified in such a way as to largely erase the vast differences between huge fires and relatively smaller ones. No effort has been made by ministers or by Ken Knight to distinguish qualitatively between these fires and therefore to capture the continued importance of emergency intervention. Neither do historic figures indicate likely future trends in emergency incidents that will result from an aging population, climate change or changing national security.

The public opposition to fire station closures that is highlighted in the Knight report is actually about the feeling of wellbeing that the public derive from the presence of a fire station in their neighbourhood. Many people believe that wellbeing should be as important a factor in determining policy as the more orthodox economic measures.

## Flooding

Last year was a record year for rain: 2012 was the second **wettest** on record in the UK, according to the Met Office. It was the wettest year on record for England and the third wettest for Wales. The fire and rescue service has always responded to floods, even though the law does not currently require this in England and Wales. New figures obtained by the FBU show that firefighters turned out to nearly twice as many flood incidents in 2012 compared to 2011 – and that these figures may underestimate the scale of our intervention, because headline incident numbers do not express the extent or severity of flooding.

In 2012, firefighters across the UK attended over 22,000 flood incidents, compared with just over 13,000 in 2011. These figures were obtained using a Freedom of Information request, with all 57 fire and rescue services sending their returns. It represents a 73% increase in flood incidents attended by the fire and rescue service in one year.

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<sup>11</sup> *These figures come from the 2004/05 Survey of English Housing.*

<sup>12</sup> DCLG, *Fire Statistics Monitor: April to September 2011*, 31 January 2012 p.15-18  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-statistics-monitor-april-to-september-2011>

<sup>13</sup> *Coroner Inquests into the London Bombings of 7 July 2005*  
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120216072438/http://7julyinquests.independent.gov.uk/>

<sup>14</sup> *Buncefield investigation* <http://www.buncefieldinvestigation.gov.uk/index.htm>

These figures, set out in full in Appendix A, are further proof that the fire and rescue service in England and Wales should have the same statutory duty to respond to flooding as fire and rescue services do in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

England accounted for most of the incidents, rising to over 19,000 in 2012 (compared to nearly 12,000 in 2011). Northern Ireland firefighters went to three times more flood incidents in 2012 than they did in 2011, whilst in Wales the response more than doubled. Turnouts were three times higher in the South West of England, Yorkshire, the East Midlands and the North East of England, while they doubled in the South East and the North West of England.

There has been a growing trend for the fire and rescue service to attend floods and water incidents over the last decade. Official figures show there were 9,263 water and flood incidents attended by the fire and rescue service in England in 2003-04.<sup>15</sup> Therefore over the succeeding decade, flood and water response more than doubled.

It was surprising therefore to find claims in Ken Knight's report that flooding response is down by 8% – a snapshot figure that ignores the last year of turnouts as well as the longer term trends. The FBU is aware that firefighters rescued over 3,000 people during the 2007 summer floods, yet this is not registered anywhere in official figures. The union is also aware that fire and rescue services count the pumping out of an entire high street during flooding or protecting critical national infrastructure as the same as a small basement flood – missing the scale of response needed.

Defra's 2012 Climate Change Risk Assessment<sup>16</sup> projects a significant increase in flood risk across the UK. Today, around 900,000 people are exposed to significant likelihood of flooding. This is estimated to increase to between 1.3 million and 3.6 million people by the 2050s. Currently around six million homes and workplaces (or one in six of all properties) are exposed to some degree of flood risk. Again, the failure to

adequately capture vital matters of national resilience leads ministers and senior civil servants to faulty conclusions as to the scope for cutting the service.

## Response times

There are other substantial figures that are missing from Ken Knight's report, which deserve to be factored into an analysis on activity by firefighters. The first issue is response times. On 10 November 2010, the then fire minister Bob Neill was asked for the latest figures for response times. He told parliament that for the period April 2009 to March 2010, England's dwelling fire average response time was 7.3 minutes.<sup>17</sup> This compared with 6.5 minutes in 2006 and 5.5 minutes in 1996 (according to a DCLG report).<sup>18</sup> This means that the average response time in England was almost **two minutes slower** than it was a decade or so before.

DCLG has since published a report on response times, using the electronic recording system.<sup>19</sup> This report shows that average response times in England slowed over the past decade from 6.1 minutes in 2001-02 to a peak of 7.4 minutes in 2010-11. Last year's figure was 7.2 minutes, a slight improvement but still a long way from the norm when there were national standards (fire and rescue services not only had to record attendance times for the first appliance, but also the attendance time of the second appliance in A and B risk areas, and crewing levels).

In a report published in 2009, DCLG attributed the slowing of response times to increased traffic levels.<sup>20</sup> However this later report from 2012 reveals that traffic levels peaked in 2007 but attendance times continued to increase. It backs up the view of the FBU that "other factors" have caused attendance times to increase.

The FBU believes that the effects of **cuts** are a central reason for the slowdown in response times. Fewer firefighters, fewer fire stations and fewer appliances have led to a worsening of the speed and necessary weight of emergency response. Another cause is the increasing number of occasions when a shortage of

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<sup>15</sup> DCLG, *Fire and rescue service operational statistics bulletins, 2004-05 to 2010-11*

<sup>16</sup> Defra, *The CCRA UK Government Report, 25 January 2012*  
[http://randd.defra.gov.uk/Document.aspx?Document=Summary\\_of\\_Key\\_Findings.pdf](http://randd.defra.gov.uk/Document.aspx?Document=Summary_of_Key_Findings.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> Hansard, 10 November 2010: Column 354W

<sup>18</sup> DCLG, *Review of Fire and Rescue Service response times – Fire Research Series 1/2009*  
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/fire/pdf/frsresponsetimes.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> DCLG, *Fire incidents response times: England 2011 to 2012, 4 July 2012*  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-incidents-response-times-england-2011-to-2012>

<sup>20</sup> DCLG, *Review of Fire and Rescue Service response times – Fire Research Series 1/2009*



staff has meant that appliances and crews are taken off the run for training and to deliver community fire safety. Sadly, DCLG does not consider the impact of cuts. Instead it blames control staff for longer call handling times and policies on "drive to arrive" and PPE dressing for worsening response times.

There are also possible accounting differences, which make comparisons with older figures difficult. The new figures are calculated from the electronic reporting system and are given weights, unlike the old paper system. Some incidents are excluded such as late calls, heat and smoke damage-only incidents, responses over an hour and other cases, which account for a quarter of incidents.

Behind the figures, other issues lurk. Response times are defined as the time from the call to the arrival of the first appliance. Some fire and rescue services have begun distinguishing between time of call and time of mobilisation. It is not clear whether some fire and rescue services are reporting the use of Targeted Response Vehicles (TRVs) and other smaller vehicles, which might arrive swiftly but cannot deal with bigger incidents.

Unlike the previous requirements of the National Standards of Fire Cover, the current figures do not record the arrival of **second or other appliances** and therefore do not indicate whether sufficient resources are available at the right time for bigger fires. The single average figure also masks wide variation in response times.

Breaking down the figures further, just five years ago firefighters were able to reach one in three of incidents in five minutes or less. In 2011-12, only one in six incidents were reached in less than five minutes. At the other end of the scale, the latest figures show that 22% of incidents take 10 minutes or longer before an appliance arrives, up from 16%. This slowdown has occurred despite far fewer incidents being attended overall than five years ago.

The impact of cuts is well-illustrated by recent response time figures revealed by the London Fire Brigade. The mayor and brigade managers have focused almost exclusively on how the cuts would affect the "average" response time across the whole of London, claiming that this would increase by only 15 seconds for the arrival of the first fire engine at an incident and 16 seconds for the second.

However, when the figures are broken down into local wards, the picture tells a very different story, with the response times in many areas significantly affected, even doubling in places where the local station has been earmarked for closure. For example, residents of Clapham Town will see response times rise from 3 minutes 56 seconds to 7 minutes 53 seconds, while those living in Bow East will wait for 7 minutes 20 seconds, up from 4 minutes 9 seconds. The number of wards which would find themselves outside of the brigade's own targets for the arrival of the first and second engines (six and eight minutes respectively) would also rise by 40 to 307. This accounts for around half the total number of council wards in London.

Further cuts will have a massive impact on the real response times to 999 emergencies actually occurring in local communities. With fewer firefighters, fewer appliances and fewer fire stations the quality of service is likely to worsen. With slower response times, more people, property and workplaces will be put at increased risk.

## Emergency intervention and rescues

Knight's report ignores the fact that firefighters continue to carry out very high levels of **rescue** from fires. Data obtained by the FBU from individual fire and rescue services indicated that over seven thousand people (7,098) were rescued from fires in the UK between April 2009 and March 2010. In England alone during the same period over five thousand (5,196) people were rescued from fires. For the UK as a whole this represents nearly 600 rescues a month, or 19 every day of the year on average.

These figures are the first results of a new electronic incident reporting system. Yet DCLG has not published figures on rescues over the last decade. It is the role of the fire and rescue service to rescue people from fire, because a fire death is a tragic failure. By ignoring rescues and focussing on fires and fire deaths, the figures cited by government measure performance in terms of the frequency of failure rather than the frequency of success.

The last set of published figures, in *Fire Statistics UK 1999* recorded just over five thousand rescues (5,099) for the UK, and nearly four thousand (3,816) in England.<sup>21</sup> Therefore it appears that while fires and fire

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<sup>21</sup> Home Office, *Fire Statistics UK 1999*, Table 13

deaths have been falling, the intervention of firefighters in a significant number of incidents attended still saves lives, reduces injuries and lessens the impact of fire on local communities.

Recent research carried out in Fife in Scotland suggests that 50% of dwelling fires that are recorded as 'small' would be 'serious' or 'severe' if it weren't for the intervention of firefighters.

## Economic costs of fire

Another series of statistics omitted from the Knight report concern the economic costs of fire. The Association of British Insurers (ABI) stated in 2009 that, "the number of fires has been falling, but the cost of these has been increasing: the average cost of fire claims more than doubled between 2002 and 2008". The ABI's analysis of fire trends showed:

- Over £1 billion in fire losses a year.
- Between 2002 and 2008 the cost of the average fire claim for both commercial and domestic fires doubled, to £21,000 and £8,000 respectively.
- Arson, which tends to increase during a recession, accounts for half of all commercial fires. Socially deprived areas and schools are especially vulnerable: arson rates are 30 times higher in poorer areas. Twenty schools a week suffer an arson attack, disrupting the education of 90,000 schoolchildren, causing damage costing £65 million.

The wider economic cost of fires is immense. In 2006, CLG estimated that the total cost was £7.03bn, equivalent to approximately 0.78% of the gross value added of the economy. Some £2.77bn of the costs were incurred in anticipation of fire. The cost of the fire and rescue service responding to fires was estimated at £1.74bn, with the remaining £2.52bn attributable to the consequences of fire, consisting of property, damage lost business, the economic cost of injuries and fatalities and the criminal justice service costs associated with prosecuting deliberate fire starters. The FBU believes these figures **underestimate** the true cost of fire – and in any case, these figures were for 2004 and so are now dated. It is disappointing that DCLG has not so far published an update on these costs, although the FBU is currently working with the Fire Sector Federation to rectify this. Nevertheless, as a

basic cost-benefit analysis, they clearly indicate the value of the fire and rescue service to the economy.

## Risk assessment, not rough guesses

Ken Knight's report questions whether population density, industrial profile and deprivation explain differences in cost between the 46 English fire and rescue services.<sup>22</sup> He argues that the cost per head of the service varies between £26 per resident per year to more than £50 per resident per year.

This kind of ranking is crude and no substitute at all for a proper **risk assessment**. Comparisons of expenditure per head of population compared with types of fire and rescue authority, industrial profile, level of deprivation and compared with fire reduction may make for some colourful bar graphs, but they shed next to no light on the fire and other emergency risks faced by the service across the country.

These correlations are an extremely blunt instrument for highlighting differences. The activity of fire and rescue services is so complex that no single factor will ever be found that is directly proportional to the cost of providing the service. Graphs that attempt to do so are meaningless snapshots that only serve to provide ammunition for the ill-informed who want to attack public services.

Similarly, bogus international comparisons – including with states such as Singapore – obscure much more than they enlighten. International comparisons on the costs of fire, fire deaths and the effectiveness of fire and rescue services are notoriously unreliable due to a lack of consistency in the data. In short, superficial associations of expenditure and efficiency add little to concerns about the quality of the service provided to the public.

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<sup>22</sup> Knight 2013 p.16

## 2) Cuts and firefighter jobs

Ken Knight's report makes a number of unsubstantiated and factually incorrect statements about government cuts to the fire and rescue service and their impact on firefighter jobs. These comments are disingenuous and serve only as a fig leaf to justify further cuts in the spending review for 2015-16. The FBU believes that there should be investment in the fire and rescue service, not cuts.

Knight says that "Government ministers have given strong statements about the need to protect the frontline from the funding reductions implemented to reduce the national deficit. But this should be about frontline service. That is not automatically the same as protecting jobs as they stand".<sup>23</sup> On the eve of the general election in 2010, David Cameron visited Carlisle fire station and promised that a Conservative government would strive to protect vital sectors such as the fire and rescue service from spending cuts. He said: "We want to get money to the frontline. That's what matters. We want a really good fire service but where we can get savings in back-office costs, we should" (*News and Star*, 5 May 2010).

Mr Cameron made it clear to the firefighters he spoke to that protecting the frontline meant their jobs. This promise has been shown to be empty. The FBU believes we have to speak out against these cuts. We have a 'duty of candour' to the communities we serve and as the representative professional body for firefighters to tell the truth – cuts cost lives and endanger public safety.

### Cuts under this government

The previous Comprehensive Spending Review (20 October 2010) included an announcement by this government that it intended to cut funding to local authority services by 25% over four years, which would include the central grant to fire authorities. On 31 January 2011, the DCLG confirmed its Local Government Settlement, providing figures for the central grant allocated metropolitan and combined fire authorities in England for 2011-12 and 2012-13. On 4 February 2013, DCLG confirmed another Local Government Settlement to fire authorities for 2013-14 and 2014-15. The cuts are summarised in table 1:

**Table 1: Revenue spending power cuts for metropolitan and combined fire authorities in England<sup>24</sup>**

Cut	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
%	-2.2	-0.5	-4.7	-3.3

These revenue spending power figures are made up of both the central funding grant and the council tax contribution. While the latter has been frozen or reduced in most cases, the effect is to understate the extent of cuts to the fire and rescue service. Figures have also been adjusted between the 2013 local government settlement and the 2011 settlement.

However it is clear that the reduction in central **formula grant** is the root cause of the cuts. This is clear from table 2:

**Table 2: Formula grant cuts for metropolitan and combined fire authorities in England**

Cut	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
£m	-61	-7	-75	-68
%	-5.8	-0.7	-7.6	-7.4

Changes to local government finance will obscure the scale of these cuts in future. Fire minister Brandon Lewis told the House of Commons recently: "Changes in local authority funding and function mean formula grant figures for one year cannot be compared directly with those for a different year. An example is the transfer of funding for concessionary travel from districts to counties in two-tier shire areas in 2011-12. From April 2013 formula grant is being replaced and councils will get to keep 50% of total business rates growth."<sup>25</sup>

The FBU believes these cuts will wreck the fire and rescue service. They are not being made on the basis of needs or risk. They have been decided arbitrarily to meet the government's deficit. The cuts will put the

<sup>23</sup> Knight 2013: 26

<sup>24</sup> DCLG, *Local Government Finance Settlement 2013/14* <http://www.local.communities.gov.uk/finance/1314/settle.htm>  
Confirmed by fire minister Brandon Lewis: Hansard, 15 April 2013: Column 218W  
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmhansrd/chan134.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> Hansard, 21 March 2013, Columns 767-68W

public and firefighters at risk. Every fire authority, whatever their governance structure or political complexion, faces a cut in its central funding. The **backloading** is no consolation – cuts on this scale will hit the number of firefighters, fire stations and appliances, since those encompass most of fire service budgets. It is simply logic-chopping to argue that the frontline service to the public will not be hit when cuts on this scale are imposed.

### Cuts before this government

Unlike many other public services, there was not a huge increase in investment in the fire and rescue service over the last decade. During the first decade of this century, expenditure on the fire and rescue service in England increased by around 47%. This compares with increased spending on the police of 56%, a 77% increase in education spending and an almost doubling of spending on the health service.<sup>26</sup>

Although over 80% of fire service expenditure is on employees' salaries, this increase in spending did not translate into more firefighters or higher pay for firefighters. On the contrary, much of this money has been spent on new equipment, very large salary increases at the level of principal management and increases in the number of non-uniformed personnel at fire headquarters.

### Job cuts under this government

Ken Knight claims that "firefighter numbers however have remained relatively stable over the period, only reducing by 6% in the last 10 years".<sup>27</sup> This is simply not true, based on publicly available, government-published statistics as well as research carried out by the FBU.

In total, the UK now has over **3,500 fewer firefighters** than when the coalition government came to power (see table 3). This amounts to a 6.6% cut in frontline firefighter jobs in just three years.

During the first year of this government, the FBU warned that a thousand firefighter jobs were under threat. In response, ministers accused the union of scaremongering. In fact the estimate turned out to be

accurate. In the union's submission to the government ahead of the autumn statement in 2012, the FBU reported that nearly 1,500 firefighter jobs had been cut during the first year (2011-12) after CSR10 and the first local government settlement.<sup>28</sup> The FBU can now report on the second year (2012-13) of that settlement, when almost **1,200 further firefighter jobs** have been lost (see Appendix B).

**Table 3: Firefighter job cuts since 2010**

Year	England	Scotland	Wales	NI	UK
2010-11	-697	-286	-41	0	-1,024
2011-12	-1,203	-103	-161	10	-1,457
2012-13	-1,183	54	-38	-19	-1,186
Total	-3,083	-335	-240	-9	-3,667

Around 80% of fire and rescue service budgets are spent on the wages of employees, so these cuts have inevitably translated into reductions in the number of frontline firefighters (those who work the wholetime or retained duty system or work in our emergency fire controls). This has mainly involved recruitment freezes, so when older firefighters reach their retirement they have not been replaced. Other reductions include the loss of control firefighter posts following the closures of control rooms on the Isle of Wight, Suffolk and Cumbria.

There have also been cuts in non-uniform support roles, with around 1,300 non-operational jobs cut in the last three years. Last year (2012-13), nearly 300 support jobs were cut across the UK.

**Table 4: Fire support job cuts in the UK since 2010**

Year	UK
2010-11	-282
2011-12	-715
2012-13	-293
Total	-1,290

<sup>26</sup> CFOA, *Fighting Fires or Firefighting*, 2012 p.11

<sup>27</sup> Knight 2013 p.14

<sup>28</sup> FBU, *Don't squeeze our fire service dry*, 2012

<http://www.fbu.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/t-Squeeze-Our-Fire-ServiceLR.pdf>

## Previous job cuts

By 2010, there were over **one thousand** fewer frontline (wholetime, retained and control) firefighters in the UK, compared with 1997 (measured on a full-time equivalent basis). From 1997 to 2010, the UK fire and rescue service experienced the loss of over 3,300 **wholetime** firefighters, a 7% fall. In the last five years of the previous government, over two thousand frontline firefighter posts were lost.<sup>29</sup>

In fact there has been a downward trend in firefighter jobs since the early 1990s. Chief Inspector of Fire Services reports indicate that, measured on a full-time equivalent basis, three and a half thousand firefighter jobs in England were lost between 1991 and 2000, a 7% fall. Some two and a half thousand wholetime firefighter jobs (7%) were lost during that period in England.<sup>30</sup>

Ken Knight is simply wrong to suggest that firefighter jobs have barely reduced in recent years. This is the third decade of cuts to wholetime firefighters. There was some increase in retained jobs in earlier decades, but these jobs have also been reduced in the last three years. Similarly, control jobs have been cut. Support and corporate-level jobs did increase significantly for a decade under the last government, but those jobs have also been reduced, though not as drastically as frontline firefighter roles.

## Retained firefighters

Ken Knight suggests that it is time for fire and rescue authorities to "make best use of on-call staff". He claims that "increasing the use of on-call staff by just 10% could [save] up to £123 million per year."<sup>31</sup>

The FBU represents the majority of retained firefighters in the UK, and it is a misnomer to regard them as "on-call", since this implies a permanent and continuous availability that simply does not exist. Retained firefighters do an **outstanding job** in providing fire cover for communities throughout the UK. However there are a number of significant barriers to substituting retained firefighters for wholetime posts.

First, **response times** for retained firefighters are generally significantly slower than for wholetime crews, simply because retained firefighters are mobilised from home or their place of main employment, and have to travel from these places to the fire station before proceeding to an incident. By contrast, wholetime crews available at fire stations 24/7 can be mobilised within minutes. In a job where every second counts, the continued need for wholetime crewing remains as robust as ever.

A second practical problem lies with the **recruitment** of retained firefighters. This is partly related to the fact that in most cases, firefighting is a second job for retained firefighters and they have other employment commitments alongside other domestic and leisure activities in their lives. In large parts of the UK, fire and rescue authorities have problems recruiting retained firefighters. The FBU has a great deal of anecdotal evidence of this. For example the union is aware that in one fire and rescue service, Derbyshire, there are 120 vacancies for retained firefighter posts.

However there is a great deal of evidence in official government reports too. Many working age people in small rural communities have to travel away from their home to find work. Consequently, their availability to become retained firefighters is severely limited. This was confirmed in a survey conducted across England and Wales in 2006 where it was found that 48% of all retained firefighters travel six or more miles to their primary employment making it impossible for them to be on-call from their place of work.

Paul Young, formerly the fire and rescue adviser and inspector for **Wales** wrote in 2010:

The apparent declining levels of employment in many rural communities presents a major problem for fire and rescue authorities. Unless adults are residing and or working within an acceptable distance of the local fire station very little can be done to provide an effective fire and rescue service using the current RDS model of provision.<sup>32</sup>

A subsequent report by his successor Brian Fraser was even more emphatic. He wrote:

There are vacancies at a number of 'On Call'

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<sup>29</sup> CIPFA, *Fire and rescue service statistics 1998-2011*

<sup>30</sup> HMCIFS *reports 1991-2000*.

<sup>31</sup> *Knight 2013 p.31-2*

<sup>32</sup> *Paul Young, A Review of the Retained Duty System in the Fire and Rescue Services of Wales, July 2010*  
<http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dsjlg/publications/fire/120320rdsreviewen.pdf>

stations in Wales, which reflects staff turnover and the need to replace people who leave the service for a variety of reasons. Matching the number of new trainees, to the number of people leaving is always difficult especially given the lead in time to train a new 'On Call' firefighter who often has to balance training time with the demands of their full time job... Although the number of people who want to be 'On Call' firefighters is sufficient to fill the vacancies, there is a high rejection rate with relatively few applicants becoming firefighters.<sup>33</sup>

These factors have also contributed to a further concern for fire and rescue services. Large numbers of **fire appliances** crewed by retained firefighters are frequently unavailable for emergencies due to the unavailability of staff. An increasing number of services have drawn attention to this area of concern. In fact, many fire and rescue services rely on deploying wholetime firefighters – one way or another – to plug gaps in retained cover and maintain the operational availability of fire appliances at retained fire stations. This reality is not addressed at all by the Knight review.

At the very least, efforts to expand the number of retained firefighters at the expense of wholetime will have an adverse effect on the service provided, but it is in all-likelihood impractical to implement. It is well-known that several thousand wholetime firefighters also work a retained contract either in their own or an adjacent brigade. Cutting wholetime firefighters would be self-defeating not only for the primary job but would hit retained provision as well.

## Firefighters' conditions

Ken Knight's report makes a completely unjustified attack on the National Joint Council Scheme of Conditions of Service for Local Authority fire and rescue services (the **Grey Book**), claiming that it "stands as either a perceived or actual barrier to change" and concluding that "it is timely to review whether the current Grey Book is fit for purpose a decade after the last significant revision". He also adds that "it is now appropriate to remove the national role maps from the Grey Book". His report completely ignores the fact that conditions of service are regularly

subject to review and discussion. Each side of the NJC is entirely free to bring proposals to negotiations.

He lauds annualised hours, self-rostering, 24-hour shifts, strategic reserves, secondary contracts, different types of response vehicles and attacks minimum crewing levels. As a former firefighter, he appears to have forgotten that properly crewed fire engines are vital to the **safety** of both firefighters and the public. His report appears to have ignored significant accident investigation findings carried out within the service on recent firefighter fatalities, as well as coroners' inquests into fire deaths.<sup>34</sup>

Attempts to worsen the conditions of firefighters will not improve the service to the public. More likely, they will hit morale and upset industrial relations within the service.

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<sup>33</sup> Brian Fraser, 'On Call' Fire-fighter Duty System Review, September 2011  
<http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dsjlg/publications/fire/130213oncallfirefighterreview.pdf>

<sup>34</sup> Knight 2013 p.27-29

### 3) Ownership and governance

Ken Knight rightly argues that the fire and rescue service is a **public good**.<sup>35</sup> In economic theory this means that if such goods were provided privately, some people would not pay for them, even though they would be able to use them. To avoid this 'free rider problem', these goods and services are paid for out of general taxation.

It is therefore odd that he suggests that the government might consider "following international example and privatising the provision of fire and rescue services".<sup>36</sup> Private ownership and control of the fire and rescue service does not make any sense. Profits would be hard to make from those putting out fires in remote farmhouses rather than in large supermarkets. Social solidarity means that local people collectively contribute to defending themselves and others from the shared risk. In addition, equity and social justice require some parity of provision. The FBU also believes that market alternatives often fail to provide what is required for all citizens and at reasonable cost.

#### No to privatisation

Knight identifies the use of the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) to fund the building of new fire stations as one of the "barriers to effective risk-to-resource planning" and as "stifling options for change".<sup>37</sup> He should have explored the disastrous behaviour of **AssetCo**, which has brought widespread ridicule. The private provider AssetCo had contracts with the London Fire Brigade covering its fire engines and equipment, as well as "contingencies" – such as providing contract staff during the 2010 London strikes. A similar contract with Lincolnshire fire and rescue service was terminated in April 2012. AssetCo became a by-word for mismanagement and greed, with over £100m of debt and near insolvency for the company itself. In and out of court, replete with internal scandal, AssetCo is a terrible advertisement for what can and does go wrong when private providers come into public services. What is particularly

disturbing is that public authorities lack control over this private company and have been left as helpless spectators watching this catastrophe unfold.

Knight mentions the failed **FiReControl** project, although for the record he consistently championed the scheme throughout its existence, until this government terminated it in December 2010.<sup>38</sup> The FBU warned consistently from the beginning that this project would fail, not least because of the promises made by private contractors and consultants on matters they could not deliver on.

The FiReControl project wasted around half a billion pounds of taxpayers' money and much of that went on private sector providers. The taxpayer is still paying £50,000 a day in rent for empty buildings, built under the Private Finance Initiative (PFI). The private sector owner of five of these buildings has now gone into administration. The National Audit Office found that the implementation of FiReControl was heavily reliant on consultants and interim staff, contributing over three-quarters of the total spending on the personnel supporting the project. The private firm EADS failed to deliver the technology necessary to allow the new control rooms to communicate effectively beyond a few square miles.<sup>39</sup> The project was rightly dubbed by the Public Accounts Committee as "one of the worst cases of project failure" they had seen in many years.<sup>40</sup>

Knight strangely argues that the recent sale of the **Fire Service College** "will help it become more price competitive, free from the constraints of government ownership".<sup>41</sup> Recent reports suggest that 11 posts are at risk of compulsory redundancy, 27 posts have been removed following the voluntary redundancy scheme and 10 vacant posts have been removed. Although firefighters belonging to the FBU are not affected by these changes, the support staff under threat do important work alongside our members. The Fire Service College has been a world-class institution, but already the takeover by Capita is slashing staff and will affect the training and facilities available.

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<sup>35</sup> Knight 2013 p.11

<sup>36</sup> Knight 2013 p.74

<sup>37</sup> Knight 2013 p.26

<sup>38</sup> Knight 2013 p.47

<sup>39</sup> NAO, *The failure of the FiReControl project*, 1 July 2011

<http://www.nao.org.uk/report/the-failure-of-the-firecontrol-project/>

<sup>40</sup> Public Accounts Committee, *The Failure of the FiReControl Project*, HC 1397, 20 September 2011

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201012/cmselect/cmpubacc/1397/1397.pdf>

<sup>41</sup> Knight 2013 p.48

## No to mutualisation

Knight's report refers to the issue of mutualisation, which is currently being explored by Cleveland senior managers. However he warns that mutuals "may not be a panacea for efficiency" and that "there is a significant risk of losing public and political trust in a highly respected public fire and rescue service without underpinning assurances in place".<sup>42</sup>

Fire minister Brandon Lewis wrote to the Regulatory Reform Committee on 23 January 2013 seeking views to "enable fire and rescue authorities in England to contract out their full range of services to a suitable provider". The briefing sent with the letter states that "fire and rescue authorities should be able to adopt alternative models for delivery, **under contract**, for some or all of their services by a suitable alternative provider e.g. a mutual, social enterprise, or other appointed contractor". The "should" indicates that they favour breaking up the current system, while "contractor" is a euphemism for a private sector provider. It says that Cleveland are a "pathfinder in the fire sector" – meaning that Cleveland is being used as a Trojan horse.

The FBU and MPs have rightly raised the alarm about this threat of privatisation. Cleveland's chief fire officer has denied it. Ian Hayton told the *Hartlepool Mail* in March: "It would be absolutely wrong to suggest that a public sector (employee-led) mutual is privatisation and it is mere scaremongering to suggest so." Brandon Lewis told parliament on 18 March 2013 that the claim that "the government are privatising, or seeking to privatise, the fire service is completely untrue".

Eric Pickles, the local government minister told the *Northern Echo* on 20 March: "Let me be absolutely clear. We will make no move, directly or indirectly, that involves the privatisation of the fire service. It is not our intention, nor will we allow, private firms to run the fire service. If that means we cannot move on mutualisation, we will not move on mutualisation – if that means privatisation of the fire service. Have I left any room for manoeuvre?"

Despite the emphatic denial, the FBU does not believe that the threat of privatisation has gone away. CFA too has written to ministers to echo the FBU's

concerns that private providers would prioritise profit over safety and that privatisation would threaten national resilience.

The FBU is clear. The union opposes privatisation and mutualisation. Our Cleveland members agree – a mass meeting involving half the firefighters in the brigade in March voted overwhelmingly against the proposed mutual. They know this is not an employee-led proposal. The union will continue to oppose efforts to dice up and sell off the service, whatever form the attack takes.

## Mergers

Knight's report advocates exploring "a more national model, through enforced mergers... or potentially a full merger in the style of **Scotland**".<sup>43</sup> He laments the fact that "numerous mergers have been proposed, investigated and eventually abandoned". He claims that Devon and Somerset made net cumulative financial savings of £4.2 million since the merger in 2007. The example of Scotland is also cited, with one-off transition costs of £25 million, which will "enable them to deliver cumulative efficiency savings of £293 million over a fifteen year period".<sup>44</sup>

There have been discussions about the merits of a national fire and rescue service versus a locally provided and accountable service since the Second World War. The FBU cannot possibly take a position without seeing a properly-costed proposal, with clarity on such vital matters as community safety, cost efficiencies, impact on firefighter safety and national resilience. Similarly, the union judges mergers on their merits – we have opposed badly-thought through and ad-hoc merger proposals, but supported the merger in Scotland because guarantees were given by the Scottish government on protecting the public through maintaining current levels of fire cover, the development of central standards, inspection and governance arrangements.

## Blue light collaboration

For many years Ken Knight has advocated the "merging of fire and rescue services with one or more of the other blue-light services" and therefore it is no surprise

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<sup>42</sup> Knight 2013 p.63

<sup>43</sup> Knight 2013 p.73

<sup>44</sup> Knight 2013 p.47; p.74



that he restates this proposal in his report. He points out that implementation of co-responding and first responder schemes is "patchy", but that "firefighters have shown a real willingness to take on these new responsibilities. He argues that a recent proposal for the Police and Crime Commissioners to also take responsibility for the fire and rescue service is "innovative".<sup>45</sup>

These proposals need to be separated. The FBU is opposed to the proposal in Northamptonshire regarding Police and Crime Commissioners overseeing the fire and rescue service. The government's own Fire Futures review two years ago ruled out the single governance model for emergency services. A forced merger, carried out with no consultation, is not in the best interests of the communities we serve or the firefighters we represent.

With regard to **co-responding** schemes, the FBU has had many discussions on this issue over many years. The union's policy has been very clear and reiterated at our conference: we are opposed to the imposition of co-responding schemes without consultation and without the necessary guarantees for our members and for the public. It is not in the interests of the public to displace the ambulance service, nor to believe that firefighters can provide a medical service on the cheap. The FBU has always been willing to discuss co-responding proposals with employers and ministers, as long as the parameters are clear. Knight's report only suggests further discussions, which the FBU is happy to engage with in good faith. The FBU is concerned, however, that such suggestions may simply be the latest fad.

## Localism

The FBU also interprets Knight's comments on "**siloism**" as implicitly a critique of localism. The fire and rescue service provides national resilience, which is more than the sum of the local parts. This ranges from cross-border support during major incidents, to collaboration of USAR and other teams dealing with particular hazards. One of the principal criticisms of the so-called "modernisation" agenda of the last government was the fragmentation of the service, brought about by scrapping national standards and some national oversight bodies such as the CFBAC and the inspectorate. These trends have continued under the current government. This has led to substantial

gaps in vital operational guidance as well as to the deterioration in the speed and weight of emergency response needed to deal efficiently with an expanding range of incident types.

For all these reasons, the FBU wants the government to invest in the fire and rescue service and immediately, to stop further planned cuts.

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<sup>45</sup> Knight 2013 p.53; p.74-5

# Appendix A: Floods

Fire and rescue service	2011 Flood incidents	2012 Flood incidents
Cleveland	46	96
Durham	81	305
Northumberland	54	127
Tyne and Wear	97	318
Humberside	65	239
North Yorkshire	159	518
South Yorkshire	14	92
West Yorkshire	95	230
Cheshire	72	203
Cumbria	61	243
Greater Manchester	308	454
Lancashire	161	377
Merseyside	151	222
Derbyshire	92	167
Leicestershire	23	134
Lincolnshire	71	343
Northamptonshire	89	223
Nottinghamshire	64	137
Hereford and Worcester	67	174
Shropshire	3	37
Staffordshire	94	633
Warwickshire	20	12
West Midlands	603	471
Bedfordshire	89	252
Cambridgeshire	81	122
Essex	261	514
Hertfordshire	214	385
Norfolk	19	91
Suffolk	4	36
London	5,890	7,084
East Sussex	315	400
Kent	22	62
Surrey	186	322
West Sussex	203	821
Berkshire	69	153
Buckinghamshire	106	194
Hampshire	131	187
Isle of Wight	18	58
Oxfordshire	64	191
Avon	177	565
Cornwall	68	307
Devon and Somerset	205	1,073
Dorset	125	224
Gloucestershire	213	299
Wiltshire	86	251
<b>ENGLAND</b>	<b>11,026</b>	<b>19,346</b>
Central	110	100
Dumfries and Galloway	14	20
Fife 110	123	
Grampian	31	87
Highlands and Islands	139	91
Lothian and Borders	50	109
Strathclyde	747	678
Tayside	131	134
<b>SCOTLAND</b>	<b>1,332</b>	<b>1,342</b>
<b>NORTHERN IRELAND</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>688</b>
Mid and West Wales	254	553
North Wales	29	285
South Wales	173	304
<b>WALES</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>1,142</b>
<b>UK</b>	<b>13,042</b>	<b>22,518</b>

Source: Freedom of Information request, Labour Research Department, January – February 2013

# Appendix B: Job Cuts

## Firefighter jobs in the UK, headcount on 31 March 2012 and 31 March 2013

Fire and rescue service		Wholetime	Retained	Control	FF
Cleveland	3	-9	-2	0	-11
Durham & Darlington	3	-14	6	1	-7
Northumberland	3	-9	-11	0	-20
Tyne and Wear	3	-40	1	-1	-40
Humberside	4	-18	-11	0	-29
North Yorkshire	4	-6	10	0	4
South Yorkshire	4	-38	-17	-5	-60
West Yorkshire	4	-85	-6	-2	-93
Cheshire	5	-18	-36	1	-53
Cumbria	5	4	-3	-15	-14
Greater Manchester	5	-84	17	-12	-79
Lancashire	5	-30	8	3	-19
Merseyside	5	-50	-92	-10	-152
Derbyshire	6	-17	15	-1	-3
Leicestershire	6	-9	-4	-1	-14
Lincolnshire	6	-13	11	0	-2
Northamptonshire	6	-5	3	-1	-3
Nottinghamshire	6	20	-50	2	-28
Hereford and Worcester	7	-7	-8	-1	-16
Shropshire	7	-26	0	1	-25
Staffordshire	7	-19	-12	0	-31
Warwickshire	7	0	0	0	0
West Midlands	7	-80	0	3	-77
Bedfordshire	9	-9	-18	-1	-28
Cambridgeshire	9	-8	-7	-1	-16
Essex	9	-27	66	2	41
Hertfordshire	9	-22	-5	-1	-28
Norfolk	9	-13	-15	-4	-32
Suffolk	9	-3	-13	0	-16
London	10	-186	0	-4	-190
East Sussex	11	-3	3	3	3
Kent	11	-14	21	-1	6
Surrey	11	-22	9	-2	-15
West Sussex	11	-12	3	1	-8
Berkshire	12	-12	-12	-1	-25
Buckinghamshire	12	0	0	0	0
Hampshire	12	-26	7	-2	-21
Isle of Wight	12	-2	-1	0	-3
Oxfordshire	12	0	7	-3	4
Avon	13	-25	-9	-1	-35
Cornwall	13	2	13	4	19
Devon and Somerset	13	-5	-7	-9	-21
Dorset	13	-6	-16	2	-20
Gloucestershire	13	-4	-13	-1	-18
Wiltshire	13	-4	-3	-1	-8
<b>ENGLAND</b>		<b>-954</b>	<b>-171</b>	<b>-58</b>	<b>-1,183</b>
<b>SCOTLAND</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>NORTHERN IRELAND</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>-34</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>-10</b>
Mid and West Wales	8	-9	45	2	38
North Wales	8	-17	-61	1	-77
South Wales	8	11	-8	-2	1
<b>WALES</b>		<b>-15</b>	<b>-24</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-38</b>
<b>UK</b>		<b>-940</b>	<b>-196</b>	<b>-50</b>	<b>-1,186</b>

These figures were obtained from all fire and rescue services in the UK (with the exception of Buckinghamshire), and are published ahead of official figures by DCLG and the devolved administrations



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