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FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES National Employers

**To: Chief Fire Officers
Chief Executives/Clerks to Fire Authorities
Chairs of Fire Authorities
Directors of Human Resources**

Members of the Employers' Side of the NJC

12 September 2012

CIRCULAR EMP/13/12

Dear Sir/Madam,

PAY SETTLEMENT 2012

1. Authorities will be aware that a pay claim has been received from the Employees' Side. The claim sought 'a rise in all NJC rates of pay equal to the percentage increase in inflation as identified by the Retail Price Index (RPI) which is available in June 2012'. That figure was 3.5%.
2. Authorities will be aware from recent circulars that the Fire Brigades Union sought the views of its members in respect of the pay negotiations and whether or not they would find the terms outlined in its consultation to be acceptable. The outcome of the consultation indicated that members of the FBU would be prepared to accept such a position.
4. Further joint discussion has since taken place and agreement in respect of the claim has now been reached with the Employees' Side of the NJC. Details of the agreement are set out in circular NJC/5/12, also issued today.
5. In reaching this agreement members of the Employers' Side took into account of a number of issues including:
 - the financial challenges facing fire authorities;
 - economic pressures on the workforce;
 - Government current public sector pay policy;
 - a desire for reform of terms and conditions;
 - the current position for local authority employees and more widely within the public sector;
 - the views of interested parties; and
 - the views of its Advisory Forum which contains chief fire officer, human resources, finance and legal advisers drawn from differing types of fire and rescue services across the UK.

6. In the case of local authority employees, members were aware of two key differences when compared with this group.
7. Firstly, unlike local authority staff this group does not have an incremental pay structure, which continues to provide local level pay increases for a substantial number of employees. To not apply a pay increase this year for fire authority employees covered by the Grey Book would however genuinely be a third year of a pay freeze.
8. Secondly, employee pension contributions for this group had increased by 0.6% in April, which was not the case for local authority staff.
9. Authorities were advised by circular following the NJC meeting in June that, taking all factors in to account, members had indicated to the Employees' Side that they would be minded to make some level of pay award linked to commitments in respect of reform of conditions of service.
10. The Employers' Side is therefore pleased that the NJC has been able to reach the agreement contained in circular NJC/5/12 and looks forward to working jointly with the Employees' Side on the review of mileage rates as well as the reform review, which will include issues such as pay structure and terms and conditions of employment.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Gittins', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Gill Gittins

Principal Negotiating Officer