

Join the RFU



'While you are protecting your community who is protecting you?'

RFU - Providing Solutions
in the Fire Service



The RFU - a professional organisation whose sole purpose is to ensure the best working conditions for its members within the fire service

The RFU – Giving the RDS a Voice

Foreword –

John Barton, General Secretary says

“The Retained Firefighters Union (RFU) is an independent trade union in accordance with the Trade Union & Labour Relations Act 1992. We have no political affiliation and therefore all monies from union subscriptions are ploughed back into maintaining a first class value for money service.

While we reserve the right to undertake industrial action as an action of last resort, we refuse to use strike action as a means of progressing our arguments. Our members have never challenged the RFU Executive to change this stance. Our members provide an emergency service in the same community in which they live and/or work which renders it impossible to take strike action against the very people who hold them in such high regard and are also their own friends, family and neighbours.

We are an organisation which fully understands the strengths of the RDS. Our commitment to the welfare of those employed on this duty system is our top priority and we need to be vigilant to keep RDS issues to the forefront of the national and local agenda as well as being fully supportive of our members when things go wrong.

We believe we are the best option, whether it is through ongoing lobbying on members collective behalf, representing you in disciplinary or grievance processes, or deploying our Legal Team to protect you if you are injured on duty.”



Representing Members since 1976

There's only one union solely dedicated to the employees working the RDS. We are a member led, non-political organisation with a no-strike constitution.

We are not just here for when things go wrong but have a long term aim to advance the Retained agenda by engaging with all the Fire Service Stakeholders at all levels and believe it is better to be a part of the solution than the problem!

Just like the RDS we are on call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year fighting your corner.

Our Structure - Local and National Representation

Whether it is the National Headquarters of the RFU, the region or the local fire service official, all of our officials are drawn from the serving RDS personnel or have at some stage been an employee within the RDS. Nobody understands the Retained Service better than the RFU.

The National Executive Council (NEC) is drawn from the services in which we have members and meet throughout the year. Executive and National Officers are elected from the NEC and some have specific references as the national lead on specific issues, Co-responding, Equality and Diversity, IPDS, USAR, Health and Safety to name but a few.

This means that the needs and aspirations of frontline RDS personnel are aired at the highest level.

Legal Representation

We have a long established partnership with Howes Percival LLP who have offices and employ agents around the UK including Scotland and Northern Ireland so you are never far from legal support wherever you are. It is a reality that Unions are judged on the way they perform when things go wrong and in the case of the RFU/Howes Percival Partnership every year we produce outcomes for our members that are second to none and our testimonials support this claim.

'On-Call'

'On-Call' is the RFU's own Accidental Injury, Illness and Death Insurance.

For a small additional fee, being a member of the 'On-Call' scheme offers exclusive insurance cover providing you with protection and your family with peace of mind should you have an accident or contract an illness or disease whilst you are working within the fire service. For more information see the separate 'On-Call' leaflet.

Bullying and Harassment

To an outsider, Bullying and Harassment could never take place in the Fire Service; after all we are all adequately trained working in perfect harmony aren't we? If only this were true. Recent national reports confirm that the Fire Service is still falling victim to harassment and victimisation.

The culture within the service as a whole is modernising but incidences of bullying continue to occur.

Mediation

Relationship issues can arise in the service and we know only too well that if this occurs at station level it can have a debilitating effect on the whole station. Mediation is one of the solutions and we will assist you if you need help and guidance.

Primary Employment

Our members often seek help with issues associated with their primary employment and whilst we focus mainly on FRS related issues for obvious reasons we are able to offer support and advice on a range of issues outside of the service.

Equality and Diversity

Every organisation has its own policies on equality and fairness and to demonstrate our faith in our policy you will see it is permanently printed on the inside of our presentation wallet.



Our support is non-judgemental and we believe we are well placed to protect, reassure and represent our members in turn doing all we can to eradicate this treatment from within the service.

Discipline and Grievance

Disciplinary procedures against the individual are very often your worst nightmare and to make your way through this alone and unsupported is risky, it can affect your health and your close family. So why not reduce the risk and let us provide you with peace of mind?

Injury Pensions and Medical Appeals

Despite the safety measures which are in place in the FRS, it is a fact that operational duties have the potential to put firefighters in dangerous situations. Sometimes injuries sustained on operational duty do not respond to treatment and become permanent; the RFU will provide support when you need it.

Pay and Conditions

More and more Fire & Rescue Services are devising their own pay and conditions locally where the RFU is recognised for Consultation and Negotiation allowing important conditions of service issues to be resolved closer to the 'Coal Face' rather than at National level.

Co-Responding

Responding to medical emergencies as a firefighter in conjunction with paramedics is another service which has immense benefit to the community. The RFU fully supports co-responding and more importantly provides protection for our members when undertaking this duty.

Here are some of our objectives:

- A 'Fire & Rescue Service' which is 'fit for purpose' which enables members to undertake such duties as Co-Responding, a response that has proven to save more lives than firefighting alone
- Representation of a RDS viewpoint at all levels
- Best Value – providing a cost-effective and efficient service to the community
- Removing artificial barriers between Retained and Wholetime personnel
- Flexibility and Equality for RDS employees

If you share the same values and beliefs as we do, you need to be a member of the RFU

Q. So what happens if you don't join?

Q. Who do you think is going to represent you at local and national level? Look at what happens when the RFU is not involved in the process:-

- Rank to Role
- Additional Responsibility Allowance (ARA)
- Continual Professional Development (CPD)
- Proposed closure of Retained Stations

Q. Are you happy to leave your future career in the hands of others, who do not share your values and haven't got your interests at heart?

The RFU - the only organisation that truly represents RDS staff

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