

16 October 2009

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## **Brigade Managers' National Joint Council**

### **Summary**

This report outlines responses received to a recent consultation with Brigade Managers that looked at current application of NJC agreed pay awards, the desire of fire authorities to stick with current arrangements and also covered future negotiating aspirations should the decision be to continue with current arrangements.

### **Recommendations**

Members are asked to note the report and use its contents to inform discussion of this item.

### **Action**

Officers to take forward any recommended actions.

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## Brigade Managers' National Joint Council

### Background

1. In December 2007 members of the full Employers' Side first explored the future of this particular negotiating body in the context of a Local Government Employers (LGE) paper concerning the potential rationalisation of the number of national negotiating groups, where the current arrangements were not widely used. As a consequence, members asked the Secretariat to prepare a report for consideration at a forthcoming meeting on possible alternative arrangements as part of the pay negotiations for 2009 and suggested that the Secretariat float the concept with the Association of Principal Fire Officers at an appropriate point during negotiations.
2. Members returned to that discussion the following year in light of the 2008 Brigade Manager Pay and Numbers Survey which at that time had indicated that only 118 employees were directly covered by the NJC and the Secretariat report which included the pros and cons of remaining with the current arrangements or alternative arrangements (attached as **Appendix A**). Members decided to consult fire authorities as part of a wider survey which also covered future negotiating aspirations should the decision be to continue with current arrangements.

### Survey Results

3. Responses to the survey by fire authorities were exceptionally low. In order to maximise the number of responses a number of reminders were issued and the Secretariat extended the deadline. It was intended that the survey results would be discussed at the Employers Side meeting on the 25 March 2009 but at that point only 15 fire authorities out of a possible 57 had responded. Members instead considered what could be done to improve the level of responses. It was agreed that the survey would be made available at the LGA's Fire Forum on the 3 April and that authorities should be encouraged to complete the survey. This resulted in 4 more responses taking the final total to 19 out of a possible 57 fire authorities - a return of just over a third.

A. In response to the question - *Do you apply the national NJC agreed pay award each year?*

Role	Yes, staff employed under Gold Book conditions	No, employed under local conditions
CFO	13 authorities (68% of responses)	6 authorities (32% of responses)
DCFO	13 authorities (68% of responses)	5 authorities (26% of responses)
ACFO1	14 authorities (74% of responses)	4 authorities (21% of responses)

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	responses)	responses)
ACFO2	9 authorities (47% of responses)	1 authority (5% of responses)
ACFO3	4 authorities (21% of responses)	1 authority (5% of responses)
ACFO4	2 authorities (11% of responses)	

B. In response to the question - *If your Brigade Management Posts are employed under Gold Book conditions, do you undertake local salary reviews on an annual basis?*

Role	Yes	No*
CFO	7 authorities (37% of responses)	9 authorities (47% of responses)
DCFO	7 authorities (37% of responses)	9 authorities (47% of responses)
ACFO1	4 authorities (21% of responses)	1 authority (5% of responses)
ACFO2	2 authorities (11% of responses)	9 authorities (47% of responses)
ACFO3	2 authorities (11% of responses)	7 authorities (37% of responses)
ACFO4	1 authority (5% of responses)	3 authorities (16% of responses)

\*Two of the authorities conduct local salary reviews on a bi-annual basis. These authorities have been included in the 'No' column.

C. In response to the question - *If your Brigade Management posts are employed under Gold Book conditions, are you content with the two-track approach to pay?*

Role	Yes	No
CFO	15 authorities (79% of responses)	
DCFO	16 authorities (84% of responses)	1 authority* (5% of responses)
ACFO1	16 authorities (84% of responses)	1 authority* (5% of responses)
ACFO2	10 authorities (53% of responses)	
ACFO3	5 authorities (26% of responses)	
ACFO4	2 authorities (11% of responses)	

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ACFO5	1 authority (5% of responses)	
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\* In the 'No' Column: The authority said that annual reviews had not been undertaken and therefore current salaries remained at the minimum under Gold Book provisions.

4. The two-track approach to pay comprises application of a nationally agreed pay award which (subject to annual review) may be supplemented at local level in recognition of additional local circumstance
5. In response to the question on the future of the national arrangement: *Would you like to see the continuation of national arrangements?* - 13 authorities out of the 19 authorities who had responded to the survey wanted to see the continuation of the national arrangements. This represented 68% of the responses to this question.

## Survey Conclusion

6. The majority of respondents apply Gold Book terms and conditions to their Brigade Managers.
7. There is no overwhelming desire from respondents to withdraw from the current negotiating machinery for this group either because Brigade Managers are directly employed on Gold Book terms and conditions or because the outcome of pay negotiations are used as a benchmark at local level. Over two-thirds wished to keep the NJC, despite a just slightly smaller proportion believing they would have the capacity to undertake such negotiations at local level. .
8. The majority of respondents were also content with the existing two-track approach to pay although satisfaction reduces as you move down the roles.

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