



Established 1918

The Fire Brigades Union

Jim Quinn Regional Secretary
Northern Ireland

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RE: FBU SUBMISSION - ICTU RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON REFORM OF PUBLIC SERVICE PENSIONS

A key concern of the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) with the proposed Bill on Public Service Pension Reform is the imposition of a Normal Pension Age (NPA) of 60 for all Firefighters. A recent independent report commissioned by the Westminster Government broadly supports the concerns of the FBU and makes it clear that the majority of current Firefighters will not be fit enough to work to 60. It warns that in such cases, "the only option is to leave or have their contract terminated on capability grounds without early payment of pension¹."

The report shows that based on actual information from four fire and rescue services that two thirds (66%) of those aged 55-60 are below the recommended fitness standard of 42 mL.kg-1.min-1. Many fire and rescue services' fitness policies, including the one used in Northern Ireland, utilise this recommended fitness level.

It also warns that "It is likely that a substantially larger proportion of women will find it hard to maintain fitness at the required level, leading to a disproportionate number becoming unfit for firefighting before age 60"². The FBU is very concerned that the proposed changes will make it difficult, if not impossible to recruit and retain adequate numbers of female Firefighters within the Fire Service. We therefore believe that a full EQIA should be carried out.

The FBU believe that the evidence supports our concerns that the NPA of 60 is inappropriate.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Quinn". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Jim Quinn
Regional Secretary
Fire Brigades Union
Northern Ireland

¹ Page 123 – 9.1.2 Normal Pension age for Firefighters- a review for the firefighters' pension committee – December 2012 – (Williams review)

² Page 138 – 11.5.5 Normal Pension age for Firefighters- a review for the firefighters' pension committee – December 2012 – (Williams review)