



## FPS Bulletin 62 – October 2022

Welcome to issue 62 of the Firefighters' Pensions Schemes bulletin.

If you are looking for information on a certain topic, issue and content indexes are held on the [main bulletin page](#) of the website and are updated following each new issue.

If you have any comments on this bulletin, suggested items for future issues, or a job you would like to advertise, please email [bluelightpensions@local.gov.uk](mailto:bluelightpensions@local.gov.uk).

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## Calendar of events

Please see below a calendar of upcoming events relevant to the Firefighters' Pension Schemes. Only those events which are hyperlinked are currently available to book. If you have any events you would like to be included in a future bulletin, please email [bluelightpensions@local.gov.uk](mailto:bluelightpensions@local.gov.uk).

Table 1: Calendar of events

Event	Date
<a href="#">FPS coffee morning</a>	8 November 2022 and 22 November 2022
Midlands regional group	2 November 2022
South-West and Wales regional group	3 November 2022
South-East regional group	8 November 2022
North-East regional group	23 November 2022
Eastern regional group	5 December 2022
SAB	8 December 2022
FPS Communications Working Group	12 December 2022

## Actions arising

Readers are asked to note the following actions arising from the bulletin:

[IQMP – Central list](#): For FRAs to inform the LGA of the IQMPs they use and to provide contact details.

## FPS

### Matthews – FPS member website update

Colleagues who attended the coffee morning on Tuesday 11 October will be aware that we have recently added some additional commentary to the [FPS member website](#) around the [special members second options exercise](#).

Prior to updating the website, we asked stakeholders for their views on what message should be communicated under the 'Do I need to do anything now?' section. An overwhelming majority confirmed that it would be useful to ask individuals, who believe they are in scope for the second exercise, to present themselves to the FRA. To assist with this process, the LGA has provided a [generic proforma](#) for members to complete and set out clear instructions that this should be returned to the FRA.

Unfortunately, we have been made aware that some members are not following this instruction and have instead been forwarding their forms to the administrator. We have therefore added some additional text which states the following:

***Please make sure that the form is returned to your FRA or former FRA and not your pension scheme administrator. Forms sent to your pension scheme administrator will not be actioned and your FRA may not then have your details to contact you when the options exercise starts.***

### Matthews – Member warm up communications

It was agreed at the [coffee morning of the 12 July 2022](#) that generic warm-up letters would be useful for FRAs when communicating with members in relation to the second options exercise. This action was taken forward and discussed at the Fire Communications Working Group (FCWG) [meeting of 16 September 2022](#).

We are pleased to confirm that the content of the letters has been agreed and that the templates for both [in scope](#) and [out of scope](#) retained firefighters have been uploaded to the [Special Members section of the FPS regulations and guidance website](#). FRAs are strongly recommended to use these templates where appropriate.

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## **IQMP – Central list**

Following feedback from the sector on the difficulties of identifying an Independent Qualified Medical Practitioner (IQMP) for ill health referrals and reassessments the LGA is proposing to hold a central list of IQMPs that FRAs would be able to approach.

We would therefore appreciate it if FRAs would share with us the contact details of the IQMPs that they currently use, we would then approach the IQMP and ask them for their permission to publicise their contact information on the protected area of the FPS regulations and guidance website.

**ACTION: For FRAs to inform the LGA of the IQMPs they use and to provide contact details.**

## **Fire and Rescue workforce and pension statistics published**

On 20 October 2022, the Home Office [published workforce and pensions statistics for Fire and Rescue Services \(England\)](#). The pension scheme statistics, covering April 2021 to March 2022, reflect data returns on income, expenditure and membership submitted by all 44 FRAs in England.

During the financial year 2021 to 2022 some of the key results were:

- **the Firefighters' Pension Scheme total expenditure was around £954 million**, a six per cent increase compared with the previous year (£903 million in financial year 2020 to 2021) and 17 per cent higher than five years previously (£818 million in financial year 2016 to 2017)
- **81 per cent of expenditure was 'recurring outgoing payments'**, 18 per cent was 'commutation payments', while 'transfers' and 'miscellaneous expenditure' together totalled one per cent
- **the Firefighters' Pension Scheme total income was around £399 million**, a one per cent increase compared with the previous year (£393 million in financial year 2020 to 2021) and a 41 per cent increase from five years previously (£283 million in financial year 2016 to 2017)

- **employer contributions rose one per cent to £266 million**, from £264 million in financial year 2020 to 2021, and nearly double the value of £134.9 million in financial year 2018 to 2019 as a result of changes to the discount rate set by HM Treasury from April 2019
- **67 per cent of income was ‘employer contributions’**, 30 per cent was ‘employee contributions’ and the remaining three per cent comprised a combination of transfers, miscellaneous income and ill-health charges
- **the Firefighters’ Pension Scheme deficit was around £556 million**, a nine per cent increase compared with the previous year (£510 million in financial year 2020 to 2021) and a four per cent increase compared with five years previously (£535 million in financial year 2016 to 2017)

### **Technical query log**

The [current log of queries and responses](#) can be accessed by practitioners in the member-restricted area of the FPS Regulations and Guidance website. The queries have been anonymised and divided into topics. The log is updated monthly in line with the bulletin release dates.

Queries regarding the compensation scheme, page 45 and retirement, page 108 have been added.

### **FPS England SAB updates**

#### **SAB remedy engagement sessions**

As reported in [FPS Bulletin 57 – May 2022](#), the Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) has been invited by the Home Office to take part in a series of joint engagement sessions with the Police SAB to consider scheme specific versions of the Provision Definition Documents (PDDs) which define the provisions of the [Public Service Pensions and Judicial Offices Act \(PSPJOA\) 2022](#) for each area of the 2015 Remedy.

One session is taking place per month between June and December 2022, with two topics discussed at each meeting. These discussions will help to inform the drafting of secondary legislation, ahead of formal consultation early in 2023.

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The most recent sessions considered early/late retirement and abatement. Material from some sessions has been added to a new page called '[age discrimination remedy – Provision Definition Documents](#)' in the member restricted area of the FPS Regulations and Guidance area for the benefit of practitioners.

Any actions arising from the feedback from the Fire and Police SABs will be taken forward and responded to by the Home Office.

### **[SAB letter to scheme managers on pension dashboards](#)**

In [FPS Bulletin 59 - July 2022](#) we reported on the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) response to the consultation on the draft Pensions Dashboards Regulations and highlighted that the staging deadline for all public service schemes will be 30 September 2024 and that the requirement to provide value data will be 1 April 2025. As a result of these new legislative requirements, the Chair of the SAB has issued a [letter to scheme managers and Local Pension Boards](#) reminding them of their duties in respect of the new [Pensions Dashboards](#), as scheme managers are ultimately responsible under the regulations for ensuring that dashboard duties are met.

These duties include:

- Working towards the staging date. The Pensions Regulator (TPR) is keen that schemes start planning now to be able to match dashboard requests to scheme records and return the required information to the dashboard. Scheme managers will need to understand how their provider will be able to pick out those requests which correspond to their members and ensure that they are providing information to the right individuals.
- Ensuring the infrastructure is in place to hold and share data with the dashboard: Administrator should be able to tell scheme managers how they are planning to connect whether through the existing software providers or through some other route.

- Reviewing scheme data: The SAB understands that the data which is used for the dashboard is likely to be based on information currently being provided as part of Annual Benefit Statements (ABSs). The SAB is keen to encourage the parties to agree consistent information for those documents, particularly given the challenges arising from the Sargeant remedy and second special members options exercise (Matthews).
- Co-operating with the Money and Pensions Service (MaPS). More information on this can be found from [Pensions dashboards: initial guidance](#)

## Other News and Updates

### Public sector unions granted judicial review over McCloud cost remedy

In [FPS bulletin 59 – July 2022](#) we confirmed that public sector unions had been granted a judicial review in relation to the McCloud/ Sargeant remedy costs in the cost control mechanism. We can now confirm that a date has been agreed for the hearing, it will commence on 23 January 2023 and has been allocated five days.

### A day in the life of The Pensions Ombudsman (TPO)

The Pensions Ombudsman (TPO) published [an article setting out a day in the life of Anthony Arter](#) on 13 October 2022. Anthony is the current Pensions Ombudsman.

The article was published to mark the fifth annual Ombuds Day. The Ombuds Day aims to educate and raise awareness among the public about the history and practices of the ombuds profession. This year's theme was resilience, respect, and resolve.

Dominic Harris will replace Anthony Arter as Pensions Ombudsman next January.



## The Pensions Regulator (TPR) enforcement and prosecution policies updated

On 25 October 2022, The Pensions Regulator (TPR) published the following:

- [revised enforcement policy](#)
- [updated prosecution policy](#)
- [new enforcement strategy](#)

These aim to give clarity on what those who are subject to enforcement action can expect from TPR.

The enforcement policy sets out TPR's approach to investigating cases and any subsequent enforcement action. The policy is now web-based and divided into standalone chapters, each with links to other relevant documents. The policy also consolidates the policies in respect of defined benefit schemes, defined contribution schemes and public service pension schemes.

The prosecution policy explains how TPR will approach prosecuting workplace pension criminal offences. The policy has been brought up to date to reflect the new criminal powers in the Pensions Schemes Act 2021 and other developments.

The enforcement strategy sets out the overarching aims of TPR's enforcement work (excluding automatic enrolment) and provides an insight into the framework TPR applies when selecting cases for enforcement action.

TPR ran a consultation on the revised enforcement and prosecution policies between 4 May 2022 and 24 June 2022 and responded on 25 October 2022. You can access the consultation documents on [the consultations page of TPR's website](#).

For more information, see the [press release from TPR](#). Erica Carroll, TPR's Director of Enforcement, has also published [a blog setting out the reasons for the changes](#).

## **The Pensions Regulator (TPR) speech at PLSA conference**

Charles Counsell, Chief Executive Officer at The Pensions Regulator (TPR), delivered a speech at the recent Pensions and Lifetime Savings Association (PLSA) conference. The speech was titled “Looking Ahead: Regulating for the Saver”.

The speech covered a wide range of issues, including dashboards, liability-driven investments, and the cost-of-living crisis.

TPR has published [an extract of the speech](#).

## **Pension Dashboards - Draft guidance on deferring staging date published**

On 17 October 2022, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) published [draft guidance on applying to defer the staging deadline](#). The DWP has also published a [template application form](#).

The draft Pensions Dashboards Regulations 2022 propose allowing trustees / managers of a pension scheme to apply to the DWP to defer their staging deadline. The regulations set out the time limits in which to apply and the circumstances where the DWP may accept applications. The DWP may only agree to defer the staging deadline once for each scheme and for a period of up to 12 months.

The DWP has produced the draft guidance to aid understanding of the application process. This includes:

- what the DWP will consider when reviewing applications
- what evidence should be submitted to support an application
- how to apply, including a recommendation to use the template application form
- how the DWP will let schemes know whether they have accepted the application and how schemes can appeal.

The DWP will finalise the draft guidance once the dashboard regulations come into force.

## **Pension Dashboards - Progress update report**

On 26 October 2022, the Pensions Dashboards Programme (PDP) published its [sixth progress update report](#).

The report covers:

- activity in the six-month period from April 2022,
- focus areas to April 2023
- updates from partners, such as the Department for Work and Pensions and the Pensions Regulator.

To complement the report, the PDP will be hosting a webinar on 3 November 2022. You can sign up for the webinar on [the registration page of the PDP's website](#).

## **Pension Dashboards - Videos published**

On 13 October 2022, the Pensions Dashboard Programme (PDP) published two short videos.

The first video is called '[Get your data ready for pensions dashboards](#)'. The video aims to give helpful guidance to schemes on how to cleanse data so that it is accurate and up to date.

The second video is called '[An introduction to find and view data](#)'. The video explains the important differences between find data and view data.

## **Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) respond to further consultation on dashboards**

On 17 October 2022, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) responded to the further consultation on dashboards. This ran from 28 June to 19 July 2022, see [FPS Bulletin 58 – June 2022](#) for more information.

The response confirms that the DWP will:

- give pension schemes six months' notice of the point at which pensions dashboards will be available to the public, the 'Dashboard Available Point'. This is an increase to the 90 days proposed in the consultation
- go ahead with the second proposal allowing the Money and Pensions Service (MaPS) and the Pensions Regulator (TPR) to share information about dashboards.

### **Research on public value of dashboards published**

The Pensions Dashboards Programme (PDP) has published the results of research carried out by Ipsos. The PDP commissioned Ipsos to carry out quantitative research into the value that people attach to pension dashboards and their likelihood to use them.

The PDP will use the results to inform development of the central digital architecture.

For more information, including a link to the results, see [the press release from the PDP](#).

### **Update on connecting early participants to the dashboard ecosystem**

On 17 October 2022, the Pensions Dashboards Programme (PDP) published [an update on the programme](#).

The information outlines the next three steps, leading to the early participants connecting to the dashboard ecosystem. The early participants are those who volunteered to help test and develop the ecosystem.

## **Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) warn that cost-of-living crisis could increase pension scams**

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) has recently issued a [press release warning that the cost-of-living crisis could cause an increase in pension scams](#).

The warning follows FCA research that a quarter of consumers would consider withdrawing money from their pension earlier than planned to cover the cost of living, making them vulnerable to pension scammers.

## **September 2022 CPI rate announced**

On 19 October 2022, the Office for National Statistics announced [the Consumer Prices Index \(CPI\) rate of inflation for September 2022 as 10.1%](#).

Government policy in recent years has been to base increases under the Pensions (Increase) Act 1971 and revaluation of pension accounts under section 9 of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 on the rate of CPI in September of the previous year.

We await confirmation from Government that the revaluation and pensions increase that will apply to FPS deferred pensions and pensions in payment in April 2023 will be 10.1 per cent.

## **HMRC**

### **Pension Schemes newsletter 143**

HMRC published [Newsletter 143](#) on 30 September 2022.

The newsletter includes articles:

- confirming that schemes can again use the pension scheme tax reference number when paying charges if they do not have a specific charge reference. HMRC had previously announced in April 2022 that schemes were unable to do so

- confirming that Government has decided against introducing a new reportable event for certain public service pension schemes from April 2023
- confirming that HMRC expects to release the event report for 2023/24 on the Managing pension schemes service in summer 2023. HMRC had previously been expected to release this in spring 2023.

### **Message from HMRC on the 2021/22 event reporting mechanism**

As last year, HMRC is prepared to accept from PCM customers, scheme data regarding pension savings statements for 2021-22 on an excel spreadsheet rather than through the scheme's Event Report. All other scheme events for 2021-22, with the exception of the lifetime allowance protection regimes (see below), must be submitted via Pensions Online.

This concession is on the clear understanding that the pension savings statement data represents part of the scheme's formal reporting obligations for the 2021-22 Event Report. The data must be submitted by 31 January 2023 and HMRC reserves the right to open enquiries based on any of the pension savings statement information provided.

The data required for each member is as follows:

- Name of Member (Title, First Name, Surname)
- National Insurance Number of Member
- Aggregate Pension Input Amounts for the scheme (x)
- Tax Year Ending (that the information relates to)
- Have you provided this member with a pension savings statement under regulation 14A(1)(b)(ii) SI 2006/567? (Y/N) (Money Purchase Pension Savings Statement)
- If Yes, provide the Aggregate Pension Input Amounts for Money Purchase Arrangements (y)

All fields must be completed. For members who have both x & y above, it would be helpful if you could list the data in the same line on the spreadsheet.

Guidance is included at [www.gov.uk/hmrc-internal-manuals/pensions-tax-manual/ptm161600](http://www.gov.uk/hmrc-internal-manuals/pensions-tax-manual/ptm161600) and [www.gov.uk/hmrc-internal-manuals/pensions-tax-manual/ptm167000](http://www.gov.uk/hmrc-internal-manuals/pensions-tax-manual/ptm167000).

For the data to be compatible with HMRC's IT systems it must be submitted on a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet encrypted via Winzip.

All files should be sent via e-mail to [pensions.businessdelivery@hmrc.gov.uk](mailto:pensions.businessdelivery@hmrc.gov.uk) and [jayesh.patel@hmrc.gov.uk](mailto:jayesh.patel@hmrc.gov.uk) copied in. HMRC will notify the scheme of receipt to enable the password to be provided under separate cover.

## **Lifetime Allowance**

You may recall from last year that, in accordance with article 6.2 of the [Pension schemes newsletter 85 - March 2017 - GOV.UK](#), the Event Report was not amended to include lifetime allowance protections that members applied for online. If you need to submit these details to HMRC, you can also submit them on a password protected spreadsheet and send the password in a separate email. You should put 'Lifetime allowance – Event Reporting' in the subject line of your email and send this to [pensions.businessdelivery@hmrc.gov.uk](mailto:pensions.businessdelivery@hmrc.gov.uk) and, again, copy in your PCM. This data must also be provided by 31 January 2023.

If the scheme chooses to use this facility to provide this information, it is entirely at the scheme's own risk. HMRC accept no responsibility of loss, interception or corruption until data is delivered safely.

## **Events**

### **FPS coffee mornings**

Our MS Teams coffee mornings are continuing every second Tuesday. The informal sessions lasting up to an hour allow practitioners to catch up with colleagues and hear a brief update on FPS issues from the LGA Bluelight team.

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The next session is due to take place on 8 November, due to diary commitments it will be held in the afternoon from 14:00 to 15:00.

We are pleased to include the presentations from recent sessions below:

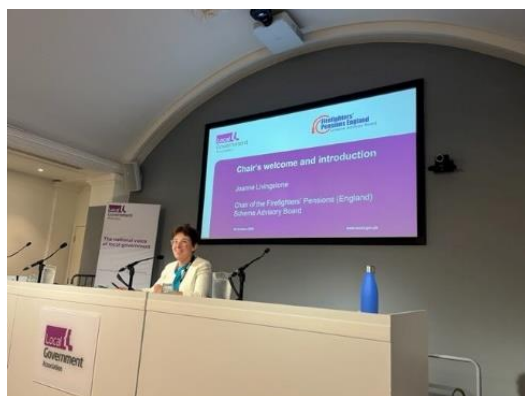
[11 October 2022 – General update on Matthews and 2015 remedy project management](#)

If you do not already receive the meeting invitations and would like to join us, please email [bluelightpensions@local.gov.uk](mailto:bluelightpensions@local.gov.uk). Please note that attendance at the coffee mornings is generally restricted to FPS practitioners and managers.

**FPS AGM - Event summary**

The 25 and 26 October saw the long-awaited return of the annual fire pensions conference. In keeping with tradition, the two-day event opened with a meeting of the regional chairs of each fire pensions officer group, followed by the technical community.

We were delighted to welcome over 50 delegates to the first full conference session, aimed at scheme managers and Local Pension Boards, along with other parties with an interest in FPS governance. Following the Chair's welcome, the audience heard from Colin Dobbie, Consultant Actuary at Isio, on how pension boards can support both scheme managers and members with the 2015 remedy.



Alison Murray, Partner from AON then took to the stage to inform the room on how they can prevent their FRAs falling foul of cyber risk and security.

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Our final speaker was Nick Gannon, policy lead at The Pensions Regulator (TPR). Nick gave an informative presentation on the forthcoming single code of practice.

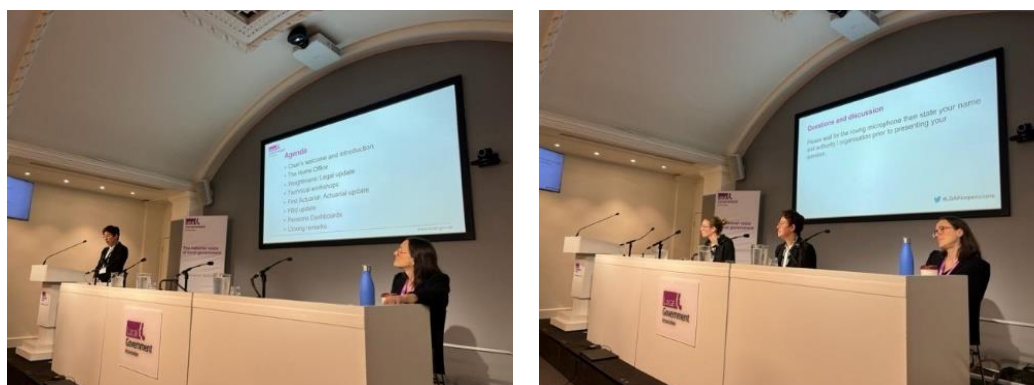


We ended the day with a networking drinks reception with lots of animated conversation between colleagues and friends.

Day one presentation slides are available [here](#).

The full technical/ administration AGM took place on day 2 with an attendance of around 80 delegates in our Bevin Hall conference room.

Joanne Livingstone, chair of the FPS (England) SAB, once again opened proceedings, outlining some of the challenges we have experienced over the last 12 months. We were then delighted to welcome Frances Clark, Deputy Head, Police Workforce & Professionalism Unit - Reward and Recognition, to provide a view from central government including progress updates on both the Matthews and age discrimination remedy.



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We then welcomed to the stage Jane Marshall, Partner from Weightmans LLP, provided the ever-popular case law update, taking the audience on a whistle stop tour of recent Pensions Ombudsman decisions.



Following a short break, attendees were given the opportunity to join one of two technical workshops: Clair Alcock, Head of Police Pension at the NPCC, hosted the workshop on discretions which generated some interesting discussion as well as sharing of best practice. In Bevin Hall Jane Marshall facilitated the workshop on the Compensation Scheme covering areas under the regulations such as eligibility, qualifying injuries, injury awards and causation, which again created a productive workshop discussion.

Lunch followed and delegates once again had chance to network with colleagues as well as visiting exhibition stands hosted by the following organisations: Isio, Pen-gage and Perspective.

In the tough first afternoon slot, James Allen, an Actuary from First Actuarial LLP, provided the audience with an update on the 2020 valuation process. Mark Rowe, National Officer from the FBU, then took to the stage to give an informative member perspective view on the challenges and frustrations they currently face.



The final session of the day focused on Pensions Dashboards. The joint session was hosted by Richard James, Programme Director from the Pensions Dashboard Programme and Lucy Stone, Business Lead on Pension Dashboards from TPR.



Joanne Livingstone closed the conference for 2022 with a message of support for the challenges that the FPS community face over the next 12 months.

We would like to thank all for their participation and support, particularly our speakers and exhibitors for contributing to the success of the event, and to all delegates who took time out of their busy schedules to attend. We look forward to seeing you again next year.

Day two presentation slides are available [here](#).

## Legislation

### Statutory Instruments

SI	Reference title
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2022/1044	<a href="#">The Pension Schemes Act 2021 (Commencement No.7 and Transitory Provision) Regulations 2022</a>
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#### **Draft dashboard regulations laid for approval**

On 17 October 2022, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) laid a draft of [The Pensions Dashboard Regulations 2022](#) before each House of Parliament.

DWP can only make the regulations if each House approves the draft by a resolution. The House of Lords will consider the regulations on 15 November 2022. As yet, no date has been set for this to happen in the House of Commons.

DWP consulted on draft dashboard regulations between 31 January 2022 and 13 March 2022. DWP responded on 15 July 2022, which we covered in [FPS Bulletin 59 – July 2022](#). The draft regulations laid before each House have been amended to reflect the consultation response. The regulations have also been amended to reflect the response to the further consultation on the Dashboards Available Point.

## Useful links

- [The Firefighters' Pensions \(England\) Scheme Advisory Board](#)
- [FPS Regulations and Guidance](#)
- [FPS Member](#)
- [Khub Firefighters Pensions Discussion Forum](#)
- [FPS1992 guidance and commentary](#)
- [The Pensions Regulator Public Service Schemes](#)
- [The Pensions Ombudsman](#)
- [HMRC Pensions Tax Manual](#)
- [LGA pensions website](#)
- [LGPS Regulations and Guidance](#)
- [LGPC Bulletins](#)
- [LGPS member site](#)
- [Scottish Public Pensions Agency - Firefighters](#)
- [Welsh Government Fire circulars](#)

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