
NEWSLETTER-FEBRUARY 07

RFU BECOMES MEMBER OF NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL

Following many years of lobbying and promises, the RFU will take its place at the negotiating table at the NJC that will meet on the 15th June 2007. Reform of the NJC, with RFU membership, was recommended by the Bain Review, and accepted by the Government in their subsequent White Paper.

This arrangement will provide an opportunity for the RFU to put forward the views of retained personnel on all major employment conditions at the national negotiating table. This historic move will also open up opportunities for developing local recognition agreements at brigade level.

Please let us know your views on what is important that needs to be progressed at the NJC.

PENSIONS OPTIONS EXERCISE

Members are reminded the deadline for them to return their option papers is **31st March 2007** (30th April in Wales).

We have discussed the few fire and rescue services that have not yet issued the options papers with Communities and Local Government (CLG), who are the Government Department responsible for fire service pensions, and they are chasing up the issue of outstanding option forms. We are advised there will be no relaxation of the above deadlines.

CLG has asked us to ensure that all personnel return their option forms in good time, whether or not they decide to join the pension scheme.

PENSIONS ADVICE – IS THIS YOU?

- Do you have more than one pension?
- Are you a member of one of the existing Group Personal Pension Schemes?
- Do you have a Stakeholder Pension?
- Are you self-employed?

If any of the above applies to you, please contact us for further information and an advice note. This note introduces access to an expert financial advice service that we have negotiated on behalf of our members to help with your pension decisions. Please note a fee will apply, but the service could help you save thousands in the long term.

PENSIONS ADVICE – FURTHER INFORMATION

The RFU has produced a series of comprehensive guidance notes to help members to understand these changes, covering:

- No. 1 - General Guidance
- No. 2 - Group Personal Pensions and Stakeholder Schemes
- No. 3 - Possible backdating to 1/7/00
- No. 4 - Possible backdating before July 2000
- No. 5 - Dual Membership
- No. 6 - Buying Back Membership
- No. 7 - Safeguarding Death and Injury Benefits
- No. 8 - Effect on a member's other pension arrangements
- No. 9 - Nomination of Survivor Benefits
- No.10 - Bounty Payments

Please 'phone or email us if you need any of this information.