

WELCOME to the summer issue of *Siren*. It's been a busy few months since our last edition.

We have some new women's regional representatives to welcome to our national committee. Heather Laurie, Region 1 (Scotland), Emma Carr, Region 9 (East Anglia), Julie Barton, Region 12 (Southern) and Gail Banks, Region 13 (South West) are all now working hard representing the women in their regions and their contact details can be found on the next page or on the NWC website www.nwcfbu.co.uk.

An important recent new initiative of the NWC was the circulation earlier this year of the FBU model maternity policy. This document, which is now with the NJC for negotiation at national level, was born out of a demand from women members and brigades requiring a consistent, fair and all-encompassing document that could be negotiated into brigades to ensure that women can enjoy their pregnancy, brigades treat them fairly and officials are armed to facilitate this.

While focusing on assisting women members, the NWC has continued to do what it can to help sisters elsewhere in the world facing incredible problems, such as the Saharawi women in Western Sahara, who will next year have suffered 30 years of the illegal Moroccan occupation. We urge you to get involved in the Sandblast campaign (see enclosed leaflet).

Also, your active involvement is absolutely essential in the union's



Janette Ferguson, Editor

campaign against the regionalisation of emergency fire control rooms, which the NWC has been highlighting within the union and fire service and in the wider trade union movement where we presented motions to the women's conferences of the TUC and STUC.

As a emergency fire control staff operator, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the brigades and regions for mounting such a successful campaign.

Emergency fire control staff don't know whether they are going to have a job or not at the end of it all. But what we are sure of is that we don't want a job in regional emergency control centres, with all the higher stress levels, sickness levels and inferior service to the public they will bring.

So send off a postcard to your MP or MSP. Send a letter to your fire board/fire authority (a postcard and standard letter can be obtained from your local FBU rep and you can also send and email direct from the FBU website - www.fbu.org.uk). Visit your local emergency fire control centre. Find out what the job is all about, why it's worth saving and at the same time help to raise morale in your control. After all, emergency fire control staff have been involved in every FBU dispute, whether it affected them or not.

Let's not forget our conference policy! We are talking about 900 job losses - 900 FBU members' jobs. We must be clear also that if any of our emergency fire control staff are made redundant then you can be assured it won't be long before they come for firefighters' jobs as well. This is an FBU dispute involving FBU members, so let's fight this together.

■ For further information about what the NWC do, how we fit into the FBU structures, who we are and why we get involved with issues and campaigns, see our website at www.nwcfbu.co.uk. Contact us if there are any issues we can help raise or problems we can assist with.

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