



**EQUALITY**

**MATTERS**

# DISCRIMINATION HARRASSMENT BULLYING

## HAVE NO PLACE IN THE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE.

But recent investigations have underlined how widespread these issues are.

The publication of the Independent Culture Review in November 2022 revealed serious issues in the London Fire Brigade, including widespread misogyny, racism, homophobia and abuse. Since the publication of the Review, similar situations have come to light in other fire services.

The Fire Brigades Union stands for equality and has a record of innovative strategies to combat cultural problems in the fire service. As the only democratic and representative body for firefighters and control staff, the union is uniquely placed to bring about change.

A piecemeal approach will not tackle toxic culture. Our Equality Matters campaign calls for national change, including UK-wide standards developed through the National Joint Council's Inclusive Fire Service Group, and equality representatives to have the time and resources to promote the equalities agenda and tackle problems in every part of the UK fire and rescue service.

It calls on employees to be leaders and set an example. In every fire service workplace across the UK, firefighters and fire control staff will come across Equality Matters materials challenging unacceptable language and behaviours.

Equality is a health and safety matter. Research conducted by the union has found that women firefighters are being forced to return to work early from maternity leave due to low pay, putting their health and safety and their children at risk. Part of the Equality Matters campaign, Fight for 52, has challenged the postcode lottery and put pressure on fire services to introduce 52 weeks full pay maternity leave.

Fire service leaders have failed to properly address and challenge these issues and, in some cases, have been at the heart of the problem. While they must step up and play a part in transforming the sector, they are not the solution.

The Fire Brigades Union is leading the way and has the solutions for building a more inclusive fire service. Employers must work with the Fire Brigades Union on Equality Matters to eradicate toxic culture from our fire service, once and for all.

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT EQUALITY MATTERS

