



**Fire Officers' Association
London Road
Moreton-in-Marsh
Gloucestershire
GL56 0RH**

Telephone: 01608 652023

Email: foa@fireofficers.org.uk
Website: www.fireofficers.org.uk

To all Members and Associate Members

July 2024

Members' Update 01/2024

Members' Statement 2024 (relating to the year ending 31st December 2023)

This statement is issued to inform members about the Association's financial and governance arrangements as well as to comply with Section 32A of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

Having submitted the Association's annual return for the business year ended 31st December 2020 to the Certification Officer for Trade Unions and Employers' Organisations, we are now in a position to provide you with the under-noted information on the Association's affairs.

A full copy of the Association's annual accounts is available on request to Head Office.

a. Income and Expenditure

The total income of the union for the period was £173,178. This amount included income of £157,678 in respect of membership income. The union's total expenditure for the period was £174,722. Net assets stood at £102,452.

The Association does not maintain a political fund.

b. Salary Paid and other benefits provided to the Chief Executive and members of the Executive

The benefits paid to the Chief Executive were £44,818 including £4,929 N.I contributions and £1,742 in respect of pension benefits. No salary or benefits were paid to the FOA President or members of the Executive Board.

c. Report of the Independent Auditors to the Members of the Fire Officers' Association

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Fire Officers' Association (the 'Association') for the year ended 31 December 2023 which comprise the Income Statement, Balance Sheet and Notes to the Financial Statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Association's affairs as at 31 December 2023 and of its profit for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of 28, 32 and 36 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Association in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Association's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Association's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Executive Board with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The Executive Board is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information in the Report of the Executive Board but does not include the financial statements and our Report of the Auditors thereon.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the Association and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Report of the Executive Board.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept with the requirements of Section 28, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures on Form 21 of officers' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- a satisfactory system of control over transactions has not been made.

Responsibilities of the Executive Board of the Association

As explained more fully in the Statement of the Executive Board's Responsibilities set out on page two, the Executive Board is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Executive Board determines necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Executive Board is responsible for assessing the Association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Executive Board either intends to liquidate the Association or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a Report of the Auditors that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

The extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities including fraud

- the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the Association through discussions with the Chief Executive and Vice Chief Executive and from our knowledge and experience of auditing Trade Unions;
- we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the Association, including the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 and taxation legislation;
- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting legal correspondence, if any; and
- identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

We assessed the susceptibility of the Association's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected, and alleged fraud; and
- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- reading the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;

- enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims; and
- reviewing correspondence, if any, with HMRC and the Association's legal advisors.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the Chief Executive and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Report of the Auditors.

Use of our Report

This report is made solely to the Association's members, as a body, in accordance with the provisions of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Association's members those matters we are required to state to them in a Report of the Auditors and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Association and the Association's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Mr Sam Narula (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Samuels LLP
3 Locks Yard
High Street
Sevenoaks
Kent
TN13 1LT

d. FOA Comment

The Association incurred an overall deficit of £1,544 in terms of income over expenditure during 2023.

The FOA continues to support Pension Remedy Employment Tribunal legal claims. Further costs in 2023 were minimal compared to 2020. The FOA anticipate that these costs will continue for the next couple of years but not at the same magnitude as in 2020.

In the meantime, we call upon members to remind colleagues who are not trade union members, that the FRS can be a very dangerous place when facing something like the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, the Manchester Arena Bombing or when finding oneself at the centre of any disciplinary allegation. Staff members need a credible voice when new or existing duty systems are being negotiated to achieve the best outcome.

Please encourage colleagues to reconsider their position. Even if they do not join the FOA, it is important to have access to support.

Irregularity statement

A member who is concerned that some irregularity may be occurring, or have occurred, in the conduct of the financial affairs of the union may take steps with a view to investigating further, obtaining clarification and, if necessary, securing regularisation of that conduct.

The member may raise any such concern with such one or more of the following as it seems appropriate to raise it with: the officials of the union, the trustees of the property of the union, the auditor or auditors of the union, the Certification Officer (who is an independent officer appointed by the Secretary of State) and the police.

Where a member believes that the financial affairs of the union have been or are being conducted in breach of the law or in breach of the rules of the union and contemplates bringing civil proceedings against the union or responsible officials or trustees, he should consider obtaining independent legal advice.