

Firefighter shortage blamed for 'shocking' number of fire engines out of service

 fbu.org.uk/news/2015/12/23/firefighter-shortage-blamed-shocking-number-fire-engines-out-service



23 December 2015 [Cuts West Midlands](#)

New figures published today on the shortage of fire engines in the West Midlands show that staff shortages are to blame for the huge number of engines that are regularly unavailable for emergency response.

Figures compiled by the West Midlands branch of the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) found that during a four week period, from 14 November 2015 to 14 December 2015, 45 fire engines were out of action because there were not enough firefighters to staff them.

The FBU has said that a new staffing system to cope with 200 firefighting posts lost since 2010 are at the heart of the problem, that is set to be further compounded by the plans to cut 300 more posts.

Andrew Scattergood, chair of the FBU in the West Midlands, said: "The cuts from the Westminster government have made it impossible to deliver a service that keeps the public safe. It will be absolutely disastrous if more posts go. We will have a rescue service in name only.

"The new staffing system that is being trialled in anticipation of the 300 job losses is already failing. At best it is unsuitable and insufficient, at worst it is dangerous and will cost lives.

"The FBU have warned the new staffing system leaves the service dependent on the goodwill of firefighters to take overtime shifts. This has already resulted in shifts being understaffed and fire engines being left unavailable. The simple fact is that there are too few firefighter in the West Midlands."

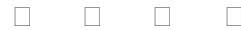
The full figures, compiled by members of the FBU in the West Midlands, detailing the number of fire engines

unavailable for emergency response can be found [here](#).



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Publication **description**

New figures on the shortage of fire engines in the west midlands show that staff shortages are to blame for the huge number of fire engines that are regularly unavailable for emergency response.

These figures show the number of fire appliances off the run from September to December 2015.

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