

18th April 2008



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Edward Shephard
Secretary

Dear Keith

FORESTRY COMMISSION TRADE UNIONS 2008 PAY CLAIM

On behalf of FDA, GMB, PCS, Prospect and Unite I should like to submit our joint trade union pay claim for 2008.

You will be aware from our previous discussions that our overall objective regarding pay is to provide our members with a sustainable pay and grading system which allows their pay to grow incrementally to a rate for the job and for all our salary levels which keep pace with increases in the cost of living. These issues have always been crucial to us but in these economically volatile times I am sure that there is no need to spell out how important it is that we secure an agreement on these matters this year. In addition we continue to strive to improve our members terms and conditions and remedy any anomalous situations which arise from time to time.

On that basis we commend the following claim to you:

1. We seek a pay increase on all pay band minima, maxima and all spine points of no less than the annual increase in the retail price index; the increase should be fully consolidated and pensionable. and should be paid in addition to any increases due through the pay progression system.
2. We seek the abolition of the current performance related pay system. Whilst we recognise the importance of managing the performance of individuals, we believe that the current PRP system is divisive, discriminatory and demotivating for many of our members. We therefore seek to sever the link between the performance management and pay systems, and (in line with our agreement as part of the last pay round) to work with you over the coming months to develop an alternative performance and reward system which will help motivate and develop our members through the meaningful recognition of development and contribution.

3. We seek to introduce a standard set of overtime and TOIL arrangements for all non-operational employees. We claim that overtime rates should be calculated based on a 37, rather than a 42 hour week and we claim that those employees who are currently required to work an additional 2.5 hours before they are eligible for overtime should be brought back into the standard system and be eligible for standard overtime, once their normal core hours have been completed.
4. We seek 30 days annual leave for all employees irrespective of grade or length of service.
5. We seek that all allowances are increased in line with annual increase in the retail price index (backdated to when ever each was last increased), and that for future years changes in non-pay allowances (dogs, ferrets, tools etc) are discussed as part of our annual discussions on other expenses related reimbursements (T&S etc) rather than through pay negotiations.

There are many other issues that we could have raised in the claim but we again feel that we have to provide a strong focus on the issues that our members have placed at the top of the bargaining agenda.

We hope that this year's negotiations can be completed in order that an agreed settlement can be paid to members as close to the operative date for pay as possible, and on that basis we stand ready to meet with you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'E. Shephard', is written in a cursive style.

Edward Shephard
Secretary FCTU Pay Committee