

It's time for the government's games to stop, say firefighters on third day of strikes

by Joe

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Firefighters are due to strike again today between 10am and 3pm over government attacks on their pensions.

It will be the third consecutive day of strike action after strikes between noon and 5pm on Friday and 2pm and 2am on Saturday, and the 12th period since the dispute began.

Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary, said: "Yet again firefighters have shown the strength of their anger over government attacks on their pensions and have been united in standing up for a fair, workable and affordable deal.

"It's very disappointing that we've been forced to hold another three days of strikes but nothing with deflect firefighters resolve when the future of their families — and the fire and rescue service itself — is at stake.

"Just like the current bout of industrial action, future strikes could be avoided simply by the government honouring current pension promises and releasing proposals for the future that reflect the discussions we've held over the last three years and take account of the evidence we have presented about our occupation.

"Surely it's now time for their games to stop and common sense to prevail?"

Firefighters have several concerns over the government's pensions proposals:

- The amount firefighters would be expected to pay in employee contributions. These are among the highest pension costs anywhere and are making firefighter pensions unaffordable
- The pensions of existing firefighters are not sufficiently protected from the proposals and existing agreements are being ripped up
- Firefighters face the risk of the sack simply because their fitness declines as they get older
- Anyone who wants to or must retire after 55 faces losing almost 50% of their pension.

