

Firefighters Pensions Scheme

2025/02

- Who should read:**
- All HR and Payroll managers
 - Pension Administration Staff
 - Staff responsible for data Submission to SPPA

Action: Read and circulate as appropriate

Subject: Annual Data Submissions and i-Connect

Date: 26 March 2025

Purpose of this Circular serves to:

- Confirm the requirements for i-Connect monthly data submission.
- Outline the annual data submission process.
- Highlight pay rise considerations for previous years.
- Explain the impact of industrial action on Firefighters' pension benefits.

i-Connect Monthly Submissions

We appreciate the significant efforts of employers and staff in submitting monthly data via i-Connect. The Scottish Public Pensions Agency (SPPA) is statutorily required to provide Annual Benefit Statements (ABS) to members by **31 August 2025**. Any failure to submit complete and accurate monthly and year-to-date data—especially in Month 12—could result in scheme members not receiving their Annual Benefit Statement (ABS) on time.

Annual Data Submission

Additional Hours (Part-Time Members Only)

Employers must report additional hours worked by part-time members that are pensionable. Additional hours are defined as hours worked beyond a member's contracted hours, up to a maximum of 42 hours per week, and paid at the plain rate.

For example: A member contracted for 30 hours per week works an additional 15 hours in each week. Only **12 of these additional hours** are pensionable. The total number of pensionable additional hours worked within the reporting period must be submitted to ensure correct service credit under the final salary scheme.

These additional hours should be recorded and submitted using the annual return template previously used before the implementation of i-Connect.

Pay Rises for Previous Years

Any pay rise relating to previous years but paid in the **current financial year** should be **excluded** from the Month 12 data. Instead, the pay rise amount should be added to the relevant previous year's data and resubmitted as an **amended annual return**.

Industrial Action and Pension Implications

Any period of absence due to industrial action is classified as **non-pensionable**, meaning that no pension contributions are deducted for time spent on strike. Consequently, such periods are excluded from benefit calculations.

Under the **2006 and 2015 Firefighters' Pension Schemes**, there is an option to **repay contributions** for strike days. However, these contributions must be paid within **six months of the strike date**. Other options to [increase pension benefits](#) may also be available for those with extended periods of industrial action.

Data Submission Requirements

All **additional hours and amended annual returns** must be submitted to RMTSPPA@gov.scot no later than **31 May 2025**.

For data protection purposes, files should be **password protected** before transmission or sent via a secure platform. (e.g., **Egress**)

Failure to Submit Data – The Pensions Regulator

Failure to meet data submission deadlines may prevent SPPA from fulfilling its statutory obligation to provide Annual Benefit Statements (ABS) for 100% of members by **31 August 2025**. If this occurs, SPPA is required to report the issue to **The Pensions Regulator** (TPR).

Employers who fail to meet the **31 May 2025** deadline may have their names included in SPPA's report to TPR. To avoid this, please ensure that data submissions are timely and complete.

For further details on employer responsibilities, please refer to the [HMRC Guidance](#)

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26 March 2025

Contact Information

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