Dear Colleagues

**BFC/SBAA LEC & UKD PAY SETTLEMENT – 2018/19**

In April, after a number of difficult years regarding LEC pay, negotiations commenced between BFC/SBAA Management and Trades Unions (TUs) and Staff Associations (SAs) on a 2018/19 settlement. After six rounds of discussions I am pleased to inform you that agreement has been reached.

Negotiations have been held against a challenging backdrop of continued austerity in the UK and across government. We have worked extremely hard with the Joint Forces Command for the authority to commit to a longer term pay deal in order to provide the stability and certainty so important to our LEC workforce. While successful in gaining approval for this, it comes inevitably with the requirement that we help fund this from within our existing resources. Work is in hand to try and identify efficiencies within our current operation to assist with the affordability of this pay agreement, along with other key emerging requirements for BFC/SBAA.

In terms of the agreement reached this week, we have listened to the TUs/SAs and to our LECs/UKDs in terms of what would be most important to them in a pay agreement and made every effort to address those issues. The results of the 2017 LEC survey informed us that in the past, staff felt that decisions had been imposed on them without taking account of their, or their TU/SA views. The negotiations and outcome, I hope, illustrate that we have listened and changed our approach.

The result in summary is a 5-year agreement which guarantees payment of increments over that time and removes the pay reductions over the course of four years. There is also a small linear increase in each year for all staff and a greater increase for those staff who are on new Terms and Conditions of service and do not benefit from the payment of increments or the reversal of the pay reductions. My Deputy Command Secretary (DCS), Phil Mallion, and the other TUs/SAs have jointly written the attached Agreement, which is signed by the DCS but has been endorsed by all TUs/SAs, and which provides more detail for you on the specific elements of the settlement. The intention is that the pay deal will be implemented immediately and paid (including back payments from April) with August salaries.

These were difficult negotiations for both sides for many reasons but importantly were approached in a professional manner by both sides, who naturally had very different perspectives. However, over the series of meetings, understanding and recognition of those perspectives, the viewpoints of
others and the demonstration of pragmatism and flexibility on both sides meant we have achieved an agreed outcome. Importantly we have also, I hope, reached a milestone in terms of future industrial relations and demonstrated what can be achieved through proper discussion, consultation and negotiation.

You have my assurance that we will always consult and respect the views of the TUs and SAs, and in doing so the members they represent. And of course, we must also always consider those who are not a member of these organisations, and consequently do not have a voice at the negotiation table.

I applaud the efforts of those involved and am hugely grateful for the diligence and effort shown by all representatives during this process.

Mike Smith

COSBAA/Command Secretary BFC