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### LATEST NEWS

#### Firefighter told to agree to 'illegal' data check or lose injury award - *EXCLUSIVE*

by Jenna Towler 31-01-2008

A former firefighter claims his injury award pension benefits will be suspended unless he agrees to "Illegal" data checks.

Retired divisional fire officer Paul Burns will have the injury award suspended on February 4 because he has not filled in a form that allows Lancashire County Council's pension administration department to check into his records with the department for work and pensions.

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Burns said he and other retired firefighters had been "bullied and threatened" by the administration department over several months.

He said: "It is a reasonable argument that if some pensioners are inadvertently getting disability payments they ought not to, then they have reasonably assumed the DWP will have been communicating regularly with the LCC.

"If this is not the case, and it now seems so because of the Data Protection Act 1998, then that is a problem for the LCC, not the pensioners.f this Act requires amending then so be it.

"This will not be achieved by bullying pensioners into signing a document under

duress, which they have no legal obligation to sign, and treating them as criminals. The consequence is that any sympathetic and loyal obligation they may have felt for the LCC's plight will by now have completely evaporated."

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**YOUR OPINION**

Should the Pensions Regulator make more use of its powers in order to protect scheme members?

- (i) Yes
- (ii) No
- (iii) Don't know

Lancashire County Council pension services manager Diane Lister said: "The county council administers fire pension schemes on behalf of Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, and we are currently carrying out a review of all firefighter injury pensions at their request."

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