



**PAY CLAIM FOR FSA MEMBERS
SUBMITTED BY FDA PCS, PROSPECT and UNISON TO THE FSA**

1. INTRODUCTION

This pay claim is submitted by the joint trade union side on behalf of staff working for the FSA.

The claim is set at a level that we believe recognises the following key points:

- Substantial increases in the cost of living over recent years have significantly reduced the value of staff wages and the rise in prices facing workers is now at a 40-year high;
- Appropriate reward is needed to sustain the morale and productivity of staff in their crucial role of delivering high quality services;
- Appropriate reward is needed for the increased workload and stress placed on staff against a background of unprecedented changes in working practices;
- Average earnings and pay settlements are surging across the economy, adding to the problem of rates running ahead of those received by FSA staff over recent year and increasing the likelihood of recruitment and retention problems in the long term.

2. SUMMARY OF CLAIM

We are seeking:

- **A 10% increase on all salary points and allowances. An additional increase in rates for staff employed as Meat Hygiene Inspectors, Official Veterinarians, FVC's, Veterinary Auditors and FVL's equating to a consolidated lump sum of £2,000;**
- **A review of HEO pay to make sure no employee at grade HEO is paid less than £32,000;**
- **An additional increase of £2,000 consolidated for Administration Officers;**
- **A minimum London Weighting payment of at least £5,000 per annum, with no detriment to any worker currently entitled to more than that;**

- An increase in the annual leave provision to 35 days per year on entry, with no detriment to any worker who is currently entitled to more than 35 days annual leave;
- Setting up of a dedicated pay framework for all veterinary staff, similar to that for Civil Service DDaT staff with annual competency-based pay progression assessments.

3. FALLING VALUE OF PAY

The table below demonstrates the major fall in living standards suffered by staff over recent years.

Year	Rise in cost of living ¹ (as measured by Retail Prices Index)
2010	4.6%
2011	5.2%
2012	3.2%
2013	3.0%
2014	2.4%
2015	1.0%
2016	1.8%
2017	3.6%
2018	3.3%
2019	2.6%
2020	1.5%
2021	4.1%
2022	9.8% - forecasted

Staff are experiencing an enormous surge in costs, including:

- A 99% increase in gas bills;
- A 54% increase in electricity bills;
- A 32% increase in petrol prices;
- A 10% rise in the price of buying a house and rent for a new rental property.

These demands on pay packets will be even greater against the background of the 1.25% increase to National Insurance contributions over 2022/23.

4. FALLING BEHIND AVERAGE PAY RATES

¹ Office for National Statistics, Consumer Price Inflation Reference Tables, January 2022

The ability of **the FSA** to attract and retain staff in the long term will be damaged if the pay of its staff falls behind the going rate in the labour market.

Average earnings growth across the economy is currently surging ahead at 7% and the Bank of England's latest survey of employers found that companies expect pay awards in 2022 to lie between 4% and 6%², prompting the Monetary Policy Committee to estimate that underlying pay growth would reach 5% in the coming months

Vacancy rates across the economy are at their highest level in over two decades, providing staff with substantial alternative areas of employment.

UNISON has already submitted the pay analysis we undertook in January on the pay of Meat Hygiene Inspectors and Official Veterinarians. We include it with this pay claim in order to add it to our overall pay claim for additional payments for MHIs and OVS. In addition, we are seeking an uplift to the pay of the very small number of FSA Administrative Officer grades whose pay is the lowest in the FSA.

5. MORALE UNDER THREAT

Working against a background of tight budgets and the unprecedented demands of the Covid-19 pandemic over the last year, staff have been facing greater workload pressures. The resulting increased stress puts the morale of the workforce at risk and poses a long-term threat to **the FSA's** ability to provide a consistent quality of service.

6. CONCLUSION

There can be no doubt that all **FSA** staff have seen the value of their earnings fall considerably over recent years and the evidence suggests that they are also falling behind earnings for comparable jobs.

Combined with these developments, the last year has seen intensified pressures placed on staff at the same time as greater job choices are opening up for staff in an improving labour market.

Therefore, this pay claim represents a very reasonable estimate of the reward staff deserve for their dedication, skill and hard work and the minimum improvement in pay needed to maintain workforce morale for delivering consistently high-quality services.

² Bank of England, Agents' Summary of Business Conditions, Q1 2022