



Agenda Item

Report

Report to:	The Board of Strathclyde Fire & Rescue
Date of Meeting:	14 August 2008
Report by:	Chief Officer

Subject:	New Challenges 2008 - 2011
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1 Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of the report is to:

- ◆ advise the Board of in principle proposals to address a number of significant challenges arising from the review of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's national framework and the objectives of the current SFR Integrated Risk Management Plan.

2 Recommendations

2.1 The Board is asked to approve the following recommendations: -

- (1) that the Board provide delegated authority to the Chief Officer for the development and implementation of redeployment measures for 60 posts made available from the extension of the current policy of dual crewing to address a number of significant challenges emerging from the modernisation and reform agenda;
- (2) that detailed reports will be submitted to the Employee and Equality Forum at each stage of the redeployment process.

3 Background

3.1 The Fire and Rescue Service faces a number of significant challenges over the next few years. These have been reflected within the current discussions on the new national framework for Fire and Rescue Services in Scotland and within the Board's current Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2007 – 2010.

3.2 These challenges include the development of our front line resources in such areas as:

- **Flooding and Severe Weather response:** reflecting the considerable focus throughout the UK on these issues after the serious floods in England during 2007, and the subject of a recent update to the Board.

- **Youth Engagement in Community Safety:** building on the early success of our Firereach and Cadet Schemes to extend youth engagement strategies across Strathclyde and involve a broader range of stakeholders.
- **Operational and Command training for front-line crews:** reflects the national impetus on enhancing operational skills and abilities and builds on SFR's lead in Operational Training and Review and the Boards commitment to a new state-of-the-art training facility. Additional resources in this critical area will support our policy of regularly verifying the operational competence of officers required to take command at incidents (ticket to ride).

3.3 Challenges also exist in key functions such as: -

- **Civil Contingencies and Resilience:** reflecting the continued prominence of issues relating to New Dimensions (ND) and resilience in the aftermath of 9/11, and the current review of Civil Contingencies and Emergency Planning arrangements by Audit Scotland.
- **ICT and critical infrastructure support:** developing these functions to support robust performance management and Operational Intelligence networks with our key partners and a new Digital Communications infrastructure.

4 Strategy for Response

- 4.1 To address these significant challenges the Chief Officer seeks delegated authority from the Board to develop and implement a response strategy. This would include proposals to redistribute 60 posts by extending the current policy of dual crewing for all High Impact – Low Activity (HILA) appliances. That is, appliances such as Major Incident Units (MIU) and Heavy Rescue Vehicle (HRV) that, while currently fully crewed on a 24/7 basis, are rarely mobilised due to the very specialist nature of their role.
- 4.2 The dual-crewing of HILA appliances is entirely consistent with the Board's current policy for such vehicles with Major Incident Control Units (MICU) and Forward Control Units (FCU), crewed on this basis. This would align Strathclyde with the specialist crewing models employed throughout Fire and Rescue Services in Scotland.
- 4.3 The policy of dual crewing enables these very specialist vehicles to remain on the run and available to attend incidents on a 24/7 basis without the need to employ dedicated staff for this purpose. Therefore this policy will not see any reduction in front line service delivery to the public.
- 4.4 Delegation of authority to the Chief Officer to implement a response strategy is consistent with the approach adopted by the Board in 2006 where authority was granted to redeploy 108 posts made available by the successful implementation of Aerial Rescue Pumps policy. At that time the Chief Officer was able to enhance service development in frontline operations such as Water Rescue on the River Clyde, Community Safety Education and Incident Investigation, Strategic Planning and Operational Assurance, consistent with the Board's first Integrated Risk Management Plan.

5 Employee Implications

- 5.1 The current workforce planning model for SFR, and in particular the number of vacancies at all levels, mean that the impact of redeployments on staff will be minimal.

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 As the basis of the proposal is redeployment, the financial implications associated with these proposals will be contained within the overall budget and no additional resources are sought.
- 6.2 As with all Public Authorities in Scotland, the Board requires to demonstrate efficiencies generated, both cashable and non cashable and has a target of 2% of its Revenue Budget to achieve during 2008/09. This proposal will generate an efficiency of £1.659m or 1.1% in a full financial year which will assist the Board in meeting its obligations in this regard.
- 6.3 The efficiency generated falls within the Government's definition of "cashable" as the level of operational response is maintained through dual crewing.
- 6.4 In accordance with the provisions of the COSLA Concordat, this proposal seeks to reinvest this efficiency saving in order to meet the new challenges outlined within the body of the report.

7 Other Implications

- 7.1 These proposals will be fully discussed with Staff Side representatives subject to approval by the Board. In addition, the Board will receive regular reports on progress towards implementation of the Integrated Risk Management Plan and our responsibilities under the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework. Detailed reports will be submitted to the Employee and Equality forum of the Board at each stage of the redeployment process.

8 Equality Impact Assessment

- 8.1 All proposals developed will be equality impact assessed in line with Board policy to ensure no negative impact.



B P Sweeney
Chief Officer
Strathclyde Fire & Rescue

7 July 2008

Link to Board Objectives

- Meets Corporate Objectives.

Previous References

- Strathclyde Fire & Rescue Integrated Risk Management Plan 2007 – 2010.

List of Background Papers

None.

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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