



CFOA
Chief Fire Officers
Association



Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service

Fire Peer Challenge

Report

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1. Introduction, context and purpose

This report captures the outcomes and presents the key findings from the Local Government Associations (LGA's) Fire Peer Challenge at Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service (DFRS) in September 2013/January 2014. The sector led peer challenge process aims to help Fire Authorities strengthen local accountability and revolutionise the way they evaluate and improve services.

Fire Peer Challenge is a voluntary process that is managed by and delivered for the sector. It is part of sector led improvement, rather than a form of sector led inspection.

The OpA self-assessment process underpins the peer challenge. It is designed to:

- form a structured and consistent basis to drive continuous improvement within the Fire and Rescue Service, and
- provide elected members on fire authorities and chief officers with information that allows them to challenge their operational service delivery to ensure it is efficient, effective and robust.

The report provides detailed information on the key focus areas of

- Leadership and Governance
- Outcomes for citizens
- The Service's Transforming Service Delivery project
- Incident Command (learning and development)
- Protection

It also provides overview information on:

- Health and safety
- Call management and incident control
- Community Risk Management
- Prevention

The announcement of the first period of FBU action led to the peer team's September 2013 visit being curtailed. The peer challenge resumed in January 2014. Throughout the visit the peer team met with highly motivated, open and cooperative staff and partners. The team are grateful for the support and communications from the Service at all stages of the peer review process from self- assessment to the site visits.

The peer challenge consisted of a range of on-site activities including:

- Interviews and focus groups with a wide range of DFRS staff and stakeholders
- Visits and focus groups with wholetime and retained duty system stations
- Challenge and testing of specific processes and systems

The peer team met with a broad cross-section of officers, staff, front line firefighters, stakeholders, partners and elected Members.

During the time in DFRS the peer team were well looked after and everyone the team met were fully engaged with the process and open and honest.

The peer team also undertook background reading provided to them in advance, including the DFRS Operational Assessment (OpA) and key supporting documentation.

The evidence and feedback gathered was assimilated into broad themes and was verbally presented on the final day of the peer review to Fire Authority members and the senior management team.

The team identified both strengths and areas for the Service and the Fire Authority to consider across the key lines of enquiry. They also explored the development and consultation on the Transforming Service Delivery proposals.

2. The Peer Challenge Team

Fire peer challenges are managed and delivered by the sector for the sector. Peers are at the heart of the peer challenge process. They help Fire and Rescue Services with their improvement and learning by providing a 'practitioner perspective' and 'critical friend' challenge.

The peer challenge team for DFRS was:

- Paul Walker DCFO Cornwall FRS – Lead Peer
- Cllr Sian Timoney – Luton Borough Council
- Simon Fryer – Area Manager – Lancashire FRS
- Paul McCourt – Group Manager- Humberside FRS
- John Tatam – LGA Associate
- Gill Elliott – Local Government Association

3. Summary

Derbyshire FRS has a strong and proactive leadership that is forward thinking and willing to address the challenges ahead. It has ambitious proposals for the way the service will be organised and delivered in the future. The Service is self-aware, and demonstrates an openness to change, with key elements of entrepreneurship and innovation at a senior strategic level. Fire Authority members understand the challenges the Service faces and there appears to be cross party support for the Transforming Service Delivery (TSD) initiative. The peer team found that the public consultation processes for both the public and staff had been thorough and well thought out and that the results of the consultation were being taken into account in the modified proposals.

The Service is involved in other major projects including a Tri-service control room project with Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire fire and rescue services that is nearing completion and a project to consider a new shared headquarters with Derbyshire Police. It will be important for the Service to consider how implementation of these major projects can best be phased and to ensure that it benefits from the efficiencies that could come from sharing facilities with other local services and cross borough collaboration.

DFRS is a key and valued partner within the County. It has made really good use of its partnerships in its Prevention activities which have helped drive down the levels of fire incidents and road traffic collisions over the last ten years. The Service has also worked with partners to achieve a range of positive outcomes for vulnerable people in the community.

The Service and its Chief Fire Officer (CFO) have played a leading national role in the Think Sprinkler campaign, Within Derbyshire partnerships with the district councils and housing organisations around domestic sprinklers have been excellent and have undoubtedly made communities safer. Alongside the reduction in fire incidents and RTCs there have sadly been a significant number of fire related deaths in Derbyshire. The Service has an excellent fire investigation team and systems and more cross partner involvement in fire death case reviews and data sharing could be encouraged.

DFRS has some excellent practices. Learning and Development around incident command is a clear strength of the organisation. Its partnership work with the Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS), the East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS), the University of Derby and Toyota is inspirational and a credit to the Service and its L&D staff.

The Service has a good approach to Protection and it works well with partners to spot hazards. Unwanted fire signals have been significantly reduced. The structure and resource allocation for Protection is an area the service may wish to explore The Service has clear and visible leadership on health and safety issues evidenced by its many awards for health and safety management over the past ten years.

The Peer team found little evidence on DFRS prioritising the celebration and sharing of key areas of good work. More shared learning would increase the awareness of the Service's involvement in the wider community safety and inclusion agenda. The geographic position of Derbyshire FRS bordered by seven other FRS's provides an excellent platform for shared learning. With the emphasis on continuous improvement Derbyshire FRS should maximise opportunities to both learn from and contribute to other FRS's both regionally and nationally.

4. Leadership and Governance

Strengths

- Strong leadership from the CFO and senior team
- Evidence of effective working relationships with partners e.g. Derbyshire police, housing organisations, multi faith network.
- Director of Finance has a clear focus on long-term planning; value for money and service improvement
- Organisation has a good sense of its direction however TSD proposes a challenging programme of change -how can it be influenced – feedback is a gift!
- Members see the Service as pro-active and adaptable with officers providing good communications and evidence based information
- Entrepreneurial approach - developing a trading arm to support non-statutory functions

Areas to explore

- Self awareness in both celebrating success and sharing learning
- Some evidence of a reluctance to implement change in day to day practices where there is a perceived risk "personal preference drives a lot of what we do here"
- Member development to enhance scrutiny and challenge
- Political support to explore the expansion of cross border arrangements

Derbyshire CFRS has a very proactive principal officer leadership team. This team's structure and working relationships support a shared vision and clear service priorities. Evidence was found of strong leadership and understanding of the valuable work Derbyshire FRS undertakes to make the communities of Derbyshire safer through wide reaching and diverse community inclusion activities. The leadership team are forward thinking, demonstrating a willingness to meet and address the challenges faced by the service, designing, proposing and communicating a range of long and short term sustainable solutions.

An impressive area of note is the effective working relationships with partners Derbyshire FRS has developed and maintains to address a much wider and diverse community safety role. These partnerships are working very effectively and delivering positive outcomes to the communities of Derbyshire. The police are enthusiastic and welcome the proposals for a shared SHQ facility at Ripley and the team found clear evidence that the service is a valued and active member of the Derbyshire Partnership Forum. The domestic sprinkler partnership with nine Local Authorities which includes match funding arrangements for the retrofitting of sprinklers to houses is excellent further evidence of strong and productive partnership working arrangements.

There is a clear focus and involvement in long term planning to address the anticipated financial challenges Derbyshire FRS face over the next 10 years. This was clearly linked to service improvement with evidence of the service improvement team working on shorter term projects with outcomes based on customer awareness, the improvement process (people and systems

development) and cost reductions. Examples include the in depth, analytical evidence based approach adopted within the scope of projects exploring the Learning and Development planning process and the response to domestic smoke alarm false alarms. This work forms a strand of the Transforming Service Delivery programme and demonstrates a joined up approach to deliver value for money through service improvement.

The team recognise that at a senior officer and Member level the challenges facing the service are clearly understood. The TSD programme is ambitious and described as a 10 year major transformation programme to deliver “less with less”. As with most complex change programmes, a planned, scale and pace for change is essential for the outcomes to be delivered and sustained over a longer period of time. The robust consultation process and staff feedback sessions highlighted a number of areas of concern and potential alternative solutions or variances to the original proposals. Where practical and affordable these should be considered and incorporated in the final proposals. Although not possible to fully evidence the scale of resistance to the proposals during the on-site programme, the senior team should satisfy themselves not only as to the extent to which all levels within the service understand the rationale and detail within the proposals but also how they are helping to lead it.

Members described the focus of the service as being ‘about modernisation not just cost cutting’. They appreciated the value of regular updates on the progress of the Transforming Service Delivery Project and felt that they are always provided with excellent information. In addition to being fully briefed the view of Members was that senior staff are open and available with a great willingness to explain and assist Members’ understanding of issues.

Members fully understood the need to look at the use of resources in a climate of declining demand on the service. Many praised the financial management of Derbyshire FRS and stated that information on finances was always presented in an understandable and clear manner.

The service is, like many others, exploring opportunities for income generation. They have made an excellent start on this and have already gained some corporate sponsorship such as company advertising on vehicles and support for the annual awards ceremony.

The team dealing with this project are already building excellent links with the local business community and the Chamber of Commerce. Recognising that building networks is key to the success of this venture they are active in the business community at events and meetings. The project for selling services is in its infancy but offers a huge amount of potential. Ideas such as selling training courses and offering corporate experience days to businesses are being fully explored with some soft market testing being carried out.

It was evident in some areas that there was a reluctance to celebrate areas of good work to promote shared learning. Increasing awareness of the service involvement in the wider community safety and inclusion agenda across both the sector and local communities is viewed as advantageous. The geographic position of Derbyshire FRS bordered by seven other FRS’s provides an excellent platform for shared learning. With the emphasis on continuous

improvement Derbyshire FRS should maximise opportunities to both learn from and contribute with other FRS's both regionally and nationally.

The review team recognise that austerity is the new norm and delivering year on year savings necessitates continuous change to the way the service operates. In some areas there was evidence of a resistance to implement and progress evidence based change, demonstrating a low risk appetite. One example of this is the existing two appliance attendance to domestic smoke alarm activations. An effective call challenge policy with a reduced attendance to one appliance would deliver savings and based on empirical incident data have little or no impact in overall response service provision to this type of incident.

It is recognised that a large number of Members are new to the Fire Authority. Having undertaken good induction programmes the focus now is on improving Members' understanding of how the Service works, its challenges and strengths as well as specific projects currently being worked upon. Developing Members' understanding takes time but is a positive move to facilitate better scrutiny and challenge. Officers will of course welcome Members challenging service plans, policies and projects in a robust manner as this ensures that local citizens' views are considered as part of the scrutiny process.

There appears to be a range of views amongst members of the Fire Authority around the expansion of cross border arrangements. The service must ensure that Members are equipped with the most up to date and honest description of the benefits of the proposals. Equally important is the need to give a balanced view including any downsides to such arrangements. Only by enhancing Members' understanding of plans and explaining the Service's desire to pursue proposals will political support be increased. It is important not to underestimate less formal opportunities for discussion other than meetings or briefings and members should be encouraged to talk ideas and concerns through with officers whenever possible. Exposure to the experiences of other services and national or regional gatherings of FRA members would also help with the discussion process.

5. Outcomes for citizens

Strengths

- RTC reduction over last 10 years 20%.
- Incident reduction in fire calls over last 10 years 50%, 62% reduction in fires.
- DFRS is a valued key partner within the county.
- Excellent partnership work on domestic sprinklers has undoubtedly made communities safer.
- Handy Van is delivering excellent work in partnership with other agencies.

Areas to explore

- Fire Deaths – cross partner commitment and involvement in fire death case review process including effective data sharing
- Celebrate success
- Gaps in service due to differences between approach of Derby City and Derbyshire CC – Handy Van Scheme not taken up by City Council
- Proactive outcomes around public health and involvement in both HWBs

Delivered in partnership, the Dying2Drive brand and events aimed at young drivers, their passengers and young learner drivers provides young people with sufficient knowledge to make informed safer choices relating to road safety. This and other road safety initiatives delivered in partnership across Derbyshire since 2008 have undoubtedly been a causal factor in the 20% reduction in road traffic collisions resulting in death and serious injury over this period of time.

These figures are clear evidence of Derbyshire FRS delivering positive measurable outcomes to the citizens of Derbyshire. A combination of effective management and reduced response to unwanted automatic fire alarms as well as a comprehensive programme of targeted community fire safety prevention and inclusion activities has been a key influencing factor in reducing incidents.

The emphasis on partnership working is very positive within the field of prevention and inclusion with a wide range of partnerships in place delivering positive outcomes to local communities. Derbyshire FRS is a valued and active member within these partnerships and utilises schemes such as “First Contact” to engage with and reduce the risks in the community through a single point of contact. The wider benefits support independent living, with increased awareness of fire safety and access to a range of community support services and benefits.

Widespread support for domestic sprinkler systems across Derbyshire is evidenced through the partnership with nine Local Authorities that Derbyshire FRS lead. Match funded investment from all partners has seen a programme for the retrofitting of domestic sprinklers or the installation of sprinkler systems in new build homes where the residents have been identified as vulnerable persons at risk from fire. The provision of portable misting systems until a more permanent solution can be assessed and installed if necessary, demonstrates the commitment to safer homes and saving lives from all involved in the partnership which is recognised a good practice.

Derbyshire FRS' participation in the Derbyshire Handy Van network provides a valuable service making it safer for older and vulnerable people to live independently in their own homes. Home fire safety and security checks, energy efficiency advice, falls prevention advice as well as practical DIY tasks deliver positive outcomes for elderly and vulnerable citizens across Derbyshire. Partnership members also include Derbyshire County Council – Adult Care, Derbyshire Constabulary and District and Borough Councils from across Derbyshire demonstrating the benefits of joined up working to support healthier, more independent and safer living for vulnerable citizens across the county.

Alongside the reduction in the number of fires a number of tragic events in the county over the past three years have resulted in a significant number of fire deaths. It is important that lessons are learned from these events so that the Service can move forward. Greater cross partner commitment and involvement in fire related death case review processes should be encouraged including more effective data sharing

Derbyshire FRS has much to be proud of in terms of its outcomes for the community. It needs to celebrate these successes more and increase the community's awareness of the breadth of its activities.

There was emerging evidence of inconsistency in approach, effectiveness of relationships and levels of partnership working between DFRS & the City Council and DFRS & the County Council". One example of this is the fact that the Handy Van Scheme has not been taken up by Derby City Council.

The Service could be more proactive in exploring outcomes around the public health agenda. For example it should have a place on both the Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWB) in the county. Currently the Service is a member of the City HWB but not the County HWB

6. Transforming Service Delivery

Strengths

- Highly visible leadership from senior management and Members
- Extensive communications to staff – who understand the context of the challenges the service face
- Good use of social media to support proposals and inform communities of local station activity levels
- Political support for the principle appears cross party
- Consultation has been thorough - drop in workshops add value
- Emergence of shared SHQ with Derbyshire Police – Ripley

Areas to explore

- Scale of proposed change is unprecedented in Derbyshire – Consider a phased implementation plan to take account of future opportunities for savings and other budget pressures
- FBU, community, political and staff consultation responses raised constructive challenges to original proposals.
- At face value the plan appears DFRS centric in terms of shared station facilities with other emergency services & LA services
- Make a stronger case for cross border arrangements to improve fire cover response and achieve savings
- Ensure additional capacity is in place to deliver large scale projects such as TSD and HQ relocation without significant impact on daily business
- Staff appetite and capacity for change – scale and pace
- Service improvement team outcomes e.g. smoke detection response

Transforming Service Delivery (TSD) is the overall title of a major programme of service reconfiguration developed in response to the changing risks across the county, the reduction in incidents and in particular the need to make significant cost reductions. Between 2011/12 and 2016/17 the service will have seen a reduction in grant funding of 40%. Although £4.4m in savings have been identified to be achieved between 2010 and the end of 2014, from reductions in posts, and reductions in spend on borrowing, transport and supplies and services, DFRS took the view that the further savings required could only be achieved through a radical restructuring of the service.

A 'comprehensive review' of response capacity had been undertaken in 2011 through an Emergency Cover Review (ECR). This identified five appliances which made a 'minimal contribution to effective service delivery'. Following consultation one of these five appliances was removed. Though described as comprehensive the ECR did not consider the closure of fire stations. The CFO argued that TSD needed to be a much more radical remit if the necessary savings were to be achieved. He therefore established a team charged with reconfiguring the service starting with 'a blank sheet of paper'. From the outset it was clear that the outcome would be 'doing less with less'. The proposal finally agreed by the FRA for consultation – Model B – involved a net reduction in fire stations from 31 to 20 but through mergers and new builds 21 of the original stations would be closed. The net saving would be £3.9m.

These are challenging proposals. The peer team saw clear evidence that the CFO and his team provided strong and visible leadership in championing the proposals and spelling out clearly why they felt it was essential to be radical if the service was to make the necessary savings. There was an extensive programme of communication with staff; all staff received a briefing and were given the chance to comment on the proposals. The peer team found that although some staff, perhaps inevitably, felt that there could have been even more communication, they were all clear about the context of the proposals and the challenges the service faced – even if they did not support the detail.

FRA members described how they had received clear and comprehensive briefings and as a result were strongly supportive of the proposals, across party lines, notwithstanding their challenging nature.

An extensive programme of consultation was carried out involving briefings, leaflets, on line material and eight all day drop in workshops. Following their experience of previous consultation exercises where public meetings tended to be dominated by a small number of the most vociferous, these workshops allowed the widest range of people to come and explore the proposals. Good use was also made of social media both to give information about the proposals but also to provide regular factual information about activity levels at different stations. At the time of the peer review the consultation had been completed and Members were about to consider their response to the range of alternative proposals which had been received.

While the review and consultation were underway the opportunity arose to firm up on a long standing proposal to provide a new joint HQ for the Fire and Police Services. This move should offer significant possibilities for further savings of back office functions.

Many constructive responses were received in the consultation and it is likely that in view of these, Model B will be significantly modified, through for example, retaining relatively newly built stations, and thus considerably fewer stations will be planned for closure. Nevertheless the final proposals are still likely to represent an unprecedented scale of change which will pose major challenges. It will be important to consider carefully the phasing of delivery not only to make it more manageable but to ensure that the organisation still has the space and energy to explore and maximise the benefits and savings from other projects including: the new joint HQ; the tri services control centre; sharing facilities with other local services and cross borough collaboration.

The TSD plan, so far, has been based on the perceived requirements of the DFRS alone with little account taken of the possible benefits of joint provision with other local services or the scope for cross border collaboration with other fire services. The review team were told that this approach was adopted deliberately in order to make a start and to have something concrete on the table that others could respond to. It will therefore be important in this next phase, to take those possibilities into account. The team felt, in particular, that with seven fire services bordering Derbyshire there should be significant opportunities for mutually beneficial collaboration.

There was recognition that the size of the projects and the scale of the changes proposed would require additional capacity to deliver. There is

funding available in the reserves to take on additional support but this will still impose a considerable demand on senior staff who will need to manage any additional support if delivery is to be kept in house. Again this underlines the need for careful planning and phasing.

Similar points about scale and pace apply to the need to keep staff on board. The team found that generally staff relationships were good and there was widespread recognition of the pressures on the service. That clearly provides a sound basis but it was also clear, perhaps not surprisingly, that many people were finding the prospect of further change daunting.

As part of the wider TSD the authority has set up a small service improvement team under the Finance Director focusing on process improvement. This is a useful additional element in the wider programme of change but it would appear that in some cases the improvement team's recommendations were not being implemented even though the case for change had been well made, in particular the practice of continuing to send two tenders to each smoke alarm call.

7. Incident Command (learning and development)

Strengths

- Use of experienced operational commanders to deliver and assess Incident Command skills.
- Introduction of Incident Command skills development for Safe to Command personnel.
- National operational outcomes shared and applied with strong ownership from Executive support function & Health and Safety
- Training philosophy embedded in “grey book” staff and being extended to “green book” staff
- Assessors trained Skills for Fire (justice) standards providing a consistent and balanced approach to competency assessment

Areas to explore

- Frequency of Command assessment at each command level - are they right based on operational activity levels?
- Strategic level incident command consider capacity, resilience and potential for shared PO cover arrangements from neighbouring FRA's

Interviews with the Learning and Development (L&D) team and with the Response Station Managers identified that experienced operational commanders are used to teach and assess Incident Command skills. This ensures that the learners benefit from the knowledge and experience of individuals who undertake the roles of incident Commander and Operational Monitoring most frequently resulting in a robust process of learning and assessment.

The Learning and Development team consider that whilst the responsibility for developing incident command skills should sit in part with the individual, they L&D had a greater part to play in exposing the learner to realistic incident scenarios in a safe environment. This has been facilitated by developing a one day course at RAF Waddington during which learners are given the opportunity to take command of incidents, observe other incident commanders and to form part of a crew in realistic scenarios. The purpose of this training is to provide developmental opportunities and feedback to the individual enabling them to develop their skills and confidence prior to undertaking safe to command assessments.

National level operational learning such as the outcomes from incidents at Atherstone on Stour, Marley Farm and Shirley Towers has a clearly defined route into the organisation coupled with defined responsibilities for ensuring that lessons learned are considered and where necessary amendments to policy, procedure and training are made. A clear audit trail from receiving information through to a gap analysis and action plan was evident demonstrating a commitment to learning from national events and to continuous improvement.

There is a highly developed learning and development plan for all personnel with a response element to their role. This includes clearly defined training frequencies for specific skills and knowledge to be refreshed and competence

based assessments for safety critical elements such as Breathing Apparatus and Incident Command. The provision includes the use of e-learning, practical activity and simulation which is supported by the robust use of a skills database. The L&D systems in place for operational personnel are being extended to support roles to ensure that personnel are effective in their roles.

Personnel based in Learning and Development, or with responsibility for developing and assessing are trained to Skills for Fire standards to ensure that a robust, consistent and evidence based assessment process is used. This approach ensures that the service is able to identify personnel as competent. Where the required level is not achieved, they are able to put in place action plans to develop the individual so that they achieve competence in a timely manner. Evidence of personnel having been removed from specific areas of responsibility such as Breathing Apparatus and Incident Command was presented along with supporting action plans and subsequent reassessment details to demonstrate the robustness of the assessment process.

Incident Commanders are subjected to competence assessments at varying frequencies dependent on their role and duty system independent of the frequency with which individuals attend operational incidents. On Call personnel and all Safe to Command personnel are required to pass an assessment on an annual basis with Strategic Commanders at the other end of the scale being assessed every three years. During interviews with operational managers it was highlighted that some individuals had only attended one incident in the last twelvemonths with the potential for significant skills decay. It is recommended that the frequencies are reviewed to take account of the individual's operational activity.

Derbyshire FRS has taken the decision to reduce the number of Principal Officers. Sustaining effective PO cover with two officers provides significant challenges. This is both in terms of personal welfare and the effectiveness of cover arrangements during spate conditions, prolonged or large scale incidents. Low levels of operational activity at a strategic level gives the opportunity to share Principal Officer cover within the wider region to provide greater resilience.

Consideration should be given to such arrangements. Whilst a robust process for assessment and the production of action plans and reassessment were evident it was felt that a risk exists in the way in which non competence is identified. The Learning and Development department evidenced a robust process of recording those deemed not competent and explained how the rota system was updated, however, this was still considered to leave a potential risk unmanaged. With the responsibility for informing managers on the incident ground of their Breathing Apparatus status sitting with the individual, it might be prudent to review this process with a recommendation that a visible marking is used on Fire helmets to identify those not competent.

8. Protection

Strengths

- Very good and clear website with customer friendly approach to business education and enforcement policy publication.
- Partner agencies and operational resources are involved in hazard spotting with integration into Community Risk Management systems (EIS).
- “THINK SPRINKLER” Leading edge best practice.
- Unwanted fire signals have been significantly reduced through collaborative protection arrangements.

Areas to explore

- Is risk based inspection programme really risk based? Targeting premises outside of response area e.g. remote rural.
- Capacity to deliver protection, is it over resourced?
- PI's for Protection appear output rather than outcome focused
- Disconnect between GM-SM. Performance Management is regarded as a role of the GM and above suggesting a reluctance to change.
- Section structure appears dis-proportionately large in comparison to other sections.

The DFRS 'Fire Safety at work and other places' section of the web site provides a comprehensive and customer friendly approach to advice, guidance and fire safety law. It makes intelligent use of hyperlinks to a technical fire safety glossary of terms. Public enforcement notice registers are published, managed and are current. Guidance for reducing unwanted fire signals are prominent and easily accessible as are guides and support for business resilience integrating the 'Derbyshire Prepared' LRF website to impart wider continuity advice.

Links to independent registers of fire risk assessors provides an impartial one stop shop for customers to easily identify accredited assessors. A comprehensive business safety FAQ section is written in a manner that is accessible to the layman. A cross link into the 'Think Sprinkler' campaign introduces visitors to the concept of sprinklers as a viable protection arrangement for commercial properties.

Established in the Community Safety (Protection) Delivery Plan 2013, the development and refining of the risk based inspection programme (RBIP) functionality is progressing well. The “forensic” approach to data capture utilising EIS software provides strong protection arrangements tracking through risk calculators. A pro-active internal and external partnership approach has led to an increased volume of 'complaints' (hazard spotting) by operational resources and 3rd party agencies (building control bodies, BASIS the British Agricultural Sites Inspection Service etc.) observing regulatory violations. Adjustments in risk data are captured by EIS with signatories being responsible for authorising entry, providing for effective auditing arrangements.

The “Think Sprinkler” campaign has been a resounding success with reports of activation in a domestic environment that occurred during the Peer Team visit. The promotion of safer houses for residents has gained significant traction moving from a position of targeted (match funded) retrofitting to incorporation into all compulsory specifications for new build domestic property developments. Negotiation of the latter position with local authorities is to be highly commended

A reduction in unwanted fire signals (UWFS) of 38% has been achieved since 2010 as a result of collaborative working between Protection and Fire Control departments. A performance managed combination of direct call challenge that triggers fire inspector contacts with responsible persons has produced successful results. This in turn has provided additional capacity for prevention work within the operations response portfolio with lower mobilisations being experienced. Guidance notes for the reduction of unwanted fire signals are easily available via the service website and are used effectively to support the direct contacts with company responsible persons.

The application of the RBIP focuses upon premises within the isochrone foot print of stations. Whilst good work is being undertaken within station boundaries, reports (September 2013) suggest that premises outside these areas are not yet systematically or intelligently targeted. Therefore gaps in operational intelligence and subsequent protection enforcement may exist. The service should explore changing the balance of RBIP to serve the populations outside of the response window and increase its scope of intelligence mapping for operations in this area.

The Protection department resources two HR structures (Policy & Delivery). The service may wish to consider a resourcing approach more conducive to reflecting the pace of legislation change.

The Protection (delivery) department utilises posts that are aligned to geographical/political boundaries. The service may wish to consider that by reshaping protection structures and deepening partnership work, it may be possible to balance the delivery of protection services and achieve efficiencies. Anecdotal evidence describes that an increase in service partnerships for protection arrangements increased ‘technical fire safety complaints’ (hazard spotting) that were responded to. The service may wish to explore a deeper education of partners to achieve reduction in complaint volume and provide capacity for other work.

Inspections/Audits are managed locally by SM’s following an annual overview based upon a capacity calculation of 6.5hrs per inspection mapped against the RBIP output for the year plus 10,000hrs. The per annum figures provided state that 17,000 hours (approx.) are required against 21,000 hours currently available. The remaining capacity 4-5000 hours are reserved to meet capacity for unplanned work (task & finish projects etc.). The service may wish to review its ways of working to realise efficiencies to assist in capacity pinch points appearing across the wider service structure.

Performance Indicators (PI’s) for Protection appear output rather than outcome focused. Some areas are overachieving and do not appear to be

directly linked to community and contribution to local economy outcomes. The service may wish to explore alternative performance measures/indicators to emphasise the link to community outcomes. E.g. number of non-compliant premises returned to compliant status etc.

There appears to be disconnect within the middle management of the section with performance management regarded as a role of the group manager level and above.

Performance management meetings for the department are reported as a monthly event. Whilst data is available via the performance dashboard, the Protection Delivery meeting minutes supplied to the peer team did not formally reference the number of audits, inspections and prosecutions achieved by the department that month. The community safety dashboard evidences false alarms by automatic fire alarms (AFA) in non-domestic properties and the percentage of fire safety audits recorded as non-compliant but no deeper reference to section performance management are apparent.

The performance measures are not visibly mapped against a monthly target and exhibit wide variations in audit volume ranging from 57 to 181 per month suggesting a variable average of 2.5 to 8 audits per month per inspector approx. (based upon figures provided).

The service may wish to explore an alternative approach to performance management tools and a more in-depth use of performance indicators with ownership at all levels within the section.

Section structure appears dis-proportionately large in comparison to other sections. The approach to capacity calculation and performance management appears to be historically linked to the maintenance of the department structure. Over time the delivery section appears to have retained its size as other sections appear to have rationalised. The service may wish to consider a review of section structure that is more aligned proportionately to wider service delivery constraints.

9. Health and Safety

Strengths

- Strong leadership displayed
- Strong health and safety culture with embedded systems
- ROSPA Gold Award achieved for past 9 years
- Logical approach to trend analysis
- Generic Risk Assessment/SOP Development and review
- ROSPA best in sector award 2011

Areas to explore

- Link fitness standards into conduct and performance

There is visible leadership and strategic focus on health and safety the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) which is identified in the Service's Health and Safety policy. The Deputy Chief Executive (DCE) is the designated H&S 'champion'.

There is evidence of an embedded safety culture at all levels, particularly evident in the way SLT are interested in safety and trends. The senior management group regularly discuss risk and safety issues and ensure action is taken where necessary. There are systems in place to monitor and deal with safety issues that are applied at all levels. All line managers complete IOSH managing safety qualifications to provide a basic initial response for health and safety whilst Station Managers and specialist staff are qualified to the NEBOSH national general certificate.

The Service has been recognised nationally for its excellent Health and Safety standards. It has attained a RoSPA gold award for nine years running, demonstrating a consistently high standard of safety management systems. It also won the emergency services sector award in 2011, was commended in 2012 and highly commended in 2013.

Standard operating procedures have been translated into operating guidance in order to clearly separate guidance from policy. Generic operational risk assessments are used to produce this guidance and risk cards which are available to operational crews for quick reference. Currently, generic risk assessments are being reviewed by operational Watch Managers in a process designed to promote ownership amongst this key stakeholder group.

Whilst DFRS actively undertakes fitness assessments for all operational personnel and provides action plans for those who do not meet the required standard, such action plans are not linked to wider performance management policies. The current fitness process provides action plans aimed at improving fitness that are not time bound and do not appear to have direct recourse to performance management tools. The service may wish to consider developing the linkage in management policies to cover personnel reluctant to engage in remedial fitness

9. Call Management

Strengths

- Good control provision despite limitations of current technology
- Very good project management for delivering Tri-Service
- Tri-service control facility offers complete interoperability with risk information sharing.

Areas to explore

- Consider moving to a 24hr nearest officer mobilising to increase operational exposure of senior roles
- Maximise all operational and efficiency benefits from the Tri Service Control project.

Policy and procedural systems for the delivery of call management and the support of incident resolution are established and a thorough understanding of systems by staff is presented. Operational risk information is readily available and access to local authority emergency planning is also established. Control staff appear well trained and rehearsed in their duties, including resilience arrangements with performance management systems embedded and monitored.

Incident support systems are in place, presenting as suitable for efficient scaling of incidents, recalling to duty, liaison with FRS National Control Centre and surrounding FRS's. The *discharge of function arrangements* (section 13 and 16, Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004) present as suitable and sufficient. Access to specialist information (ChemMet, Chemdata) and officers (e.g. Hazardous Material Officers, Environmental Protection Officers, etc.) also present as efficient and integrated. The underpinning technology suite is undoubtedly aging and resolution will be achieved through a transfer of control rooms to the Tri Service facility in 2014.

The Tri-Service Control Room project is nearing fruition with a 'go live' date established in 2014. The project milestones have been achieved and the project is set to deliver a 'fit for the future' platform across three FRS's. Personnel appear energised and motivated by the prospect of a new facility and keen to work in new ways and a new environment.

The technology presented by the Tri Service platform offers complete interoperability with risk information sharing. When finalised, the facility will underpin intelligence exchange moving the three collaborative FRS's towards alignment of incident types and attendance codes. Liaison with other Category 1 responders is evident and scope is emerging to strengthen communications in this area.

A decline in volume of calls for service has reduced the potential for operational exposure across the FDS (Flexible Duty System) officers cadre. The current position indicates that in 977 mobilisations of FDS some Area Managers and Group Managers are experiencing low call out volume (single figures) and therefore incident exposure. The Service may wish to consider a mobilisation practice that increases officer incident exposure and contributes to a wider operational assurance agenda when combined with training

arrangements. It could consider moving to a 24hr nearest officer mobilising to increase operational exposure of senior roles.

Once established the Tri-service control system should not only deliver planned savings but will provide opportunities for other “add on” benefits. Within the context of the current financial pressures it will be important for the Service to maximise all operational and efficiency opportunities that arise from the project. The Tri Service control room offers an interface that could expand the remit of service delivery into a multi-agency arena or indeed rationalise call handling and mobilisation protocols to operate on a cross border basis.

10. Community Risk Management

Strengths

- EIS (PORIS) system in transition, will be good if continued to fruition.
- Comprehensive and evidence based operational risk profile.

Areas to explore

- Wider availability of risk information from surrounding FRS's for MDT's (Data appears to be local to the station only).

The EIS (enterprise information system) based on PORIS principles (Provision of Operational Risk Information) is replacing a previous Operational Risk Review system. The EIS offers effective and up-to-date arrangements for the collation of risk information to provide for operational crews and appears aligned to the principles of relevance, timeliness and accuracy. Whilst the system is still under development (bulk transfer of commercial information due for completion in August 2014) the EIS will provide a comprehensive account of the operational risk profile at the fingertips of personnel active in operational, prevention and protection activities.

The forensic nature of the EIS database provides accountability and auditable systems that provides for quality assurance through the capture of authors and reviewers of information. The alignment of MOSAIC data with vulnerable group risk characteristics provides a powerful tool for the direction of engagement with communities. This is demonstrated in the variety of targeted safety initiatives such as the ‘Handy Van’ scheme that is delivering a high yield return on targeted risks.

The operational risk profile appears both comprehensive and evidence based. Site plans are produced in conjunction with on-site responsible persons and tactical plans are produced to an agreed approach. The resulting information in its completed format is shared with crews via mobile data systems on all appliances.

There appears to be a lack of familiarity at a number of levels operationally within the organisation with the capabilities of, and information stored on, the

mobile data terminals. This is a concern due to the risk critical nature and the importance of this information when making assessments and decisions on the incident ground.'

11. Prevention

Strengths

- The domestic elements of Think Sprinkler campaign appears strong and focussed.
- Clear focus on inclusion.
- Strong partnerships around vulnerable people.

Areas to explore

- Think Sprinkler could be strategically linked to NHS around vulnerable citizens.
- Balance of partnership activity between City and County Councils.

Nine of the ten local authorities in Derbyshire are now in support of the domestic sprinkler campaign and have committed to match fund with the Service, giving a total spend of £360,000 towards the project. For each local authority, the funding can be used for retrofitting domestic sprinklers, installing them in new developments identified for vulnerable persons at risk to fire or for the provision of portable misting systems . Due to the success of the project, a further £200,000 was set aside by DFRA for the project in 2013/14.

The Service is continuing to continue to work closely with Derbyshire County and the District Authorities, Derby City Council and other partners to ensure that the benefits of domestic sprinkler systems are passed on to all those with a responsibility for providing, developing, or building new homes.

The equalities work undertaken by Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service has been rated as 'Excellent' by the Fire Services Equalities Framework. The business model used here is viewed as Good Practice by CFOA and by other Fire and rescue Services around the country. The peer review team saw evidence of excellent support for the inclusion agenda from the senior leadership team. The development of the Independent Community Board is another area of good practice. This board brings together representatives from a wide variety of communities including young people, BME and disabled groups. This positive approach ensures that not only are these voices and views heard but that the representatives also champion the prevention agenda back to their own communities or groups.

DFRS has some strong partnerships around vulnerable people. These include the multi-faith network, the Roma community, Age UK, Handy Van

Despite some good work with the local authorities in the area, there is still a lack of balance in the way DFRS engages with Derby City and the County Council. This is evidenced by the fact that City Council is not involved in the Handy Van Scheme but the County Council is and DFRS' non-involvement in the County Health and Well Being Board.

12. Notable Practices

National “Think Sprinkler” Campaign

DFRS continues to lead nationally on the sprinkler campaign and the CFO/CE was the CFOA lead for domestic sprinklers. Due to the on-going success of the campaign, the Service has attracted interest from other FRSs. It currently provides advice and assistance to Essex FRS, Tyne & Wear FRS, Greater Manchester FRS, Dorset FRS and Norfolk FRS in relation to domestic sprinklers and their individual campaigns. It continues to work with other FRSs and pass on best practice. DFRS officers have attended a number of national events in order to progress the ‘campaign. The CFO/CE has engaged with the Fire Minister and the Building Regulations Minister to lobby for a change in legislation.

Fire Investigation (FI) Team Major Incident Guidance.

The DFRS Standard Operational Guidance: *Fire Investigations involving Major/Significant Incidents*, establishes a framework for the integration of fire investigation at high profile fires. The document provides comprehensive guidance on the role and integration of specialist fire investigation officers into the ICS system at such incidents. It covers such areas as; FRS employee serious injury/ fatality, Multi Agency roles, Primacy, Confidentiality, Terms of Reference, Information Recording/Sharing, Court Presentations, Major Incident FI Structures, FI Team compositions and Debriefing. Available across service information platforms (MODAS etc), the document provides a single point of reference for an efficient establishment of specialist FI Officer integration into the Incident Command Structure at major or high profile fires. DFRS is to be commended upon this area of notable good practice.

Training partnership with EMAS, HEMS, Toyota, University and A&E.

Learning and development staff identified an opportunity to improve the standard of casualty care at RTC's through a closer collaboration with the East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS), Accident and Emergency (A&E) at Derby Hospital, the Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS) and the local University. As a result of the vision and determination of the L&D staff at the Kingsway training centre, EMAS are regular visitors and contributors to training courses dealing with casualty care and FRS personnel are given the opportunity to spend time in the local A&E to experience post-accident care. This arrangement has been reciprocated and A&E personnel are able to participate in RTC training at Kingsway to get a better understanding of pre hospital care and the mechanisms of injury.

The Service had already successfully brokered a relationship with Toyota for the provision of new cars for RTC training and built upon this relationship. Students from the local University engaged with staff at Kingsway to produce a reusable car which demonstrates the safety systems found in new vehicles such as multiple airbags, seat belt pre-tensioners and the positioning of other potential hazards in modern vehicle construction. This is an excellent resource which has attracted attention at a national level.

13. Conclusion and contact information

Throughout the peer challenge the team met with enthusiastic and committed officers and staff. It is clear that Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service has come a long way and has a clear direction for the future.

For more information regarding the Fire Peer Challenge of DFRS please contact:

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