

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

**INTEGRATED RISK
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

ACTION PLAN

**YEAR ONE
2004 / 05**

INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT

ACTION PLAN 2004/05

What is an Integrated Risk Management Action Plan?

As part of the Government's drive to reform public services, the Deputy Prime Minister has instigated a programme of modernisation of the framework within which the Fire and Rescue Service operates.

As part of this drive it is a requirement for Fire and Rescue Services to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) to identify objectives and outcomes where improvements to community safety can be made.

An Integrated Risk Management **Action** Plan is simply a plan to review, research and implement these improvements to community safety.

Who will be involved in progressing the Action Plan?

A review team comprising senior managers, members of representative bodies and other support staff has been assembled. This team will lead and complete all the phases of each project. Each team member has specialist skills and experience in specific areas, which will be vital to the success of the IRMP. Other specialists will be co-opted or consulted as the IRMP process evolves.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer will report progress of the team to the Fire Authority.

What will the Action Plan be assessing in year one?

It is recognised that the aims and outcomes identified in the IRMP are long-term objectives and will be made in incremental stages, the first stage being the Year One Action Plan described here.

The Year One Action Plan develops separate areas, some of which have been identified as producing immediate benefits, and those that will lay the foundations for subsequent action plans.

An action plan giving the background and anticipated benefits of change for each of these areas can be found in APPENDIX A.

A detailed project plan will be produced for each of these action plans once the consultation process has been completed. This will give details of resources, timescales, lead officers and methodology. Appropriate project tools will be used to monitor progress.

Areas of focus in year one

- Expansion of co-responder schemes (fire fighters providing emergency response for heart attack victims using defibrillators) in partnership with the Royal Berkshire Ambulance NHS Trust.
- Review response to automatic fire alarms.
- Review response of aerial appliances to incidents.
- Focused recruitment and retention strategy for fire stations that utilise part-time firefighters, making appropriate use of the new flexibility in Conditions of Service.
- Hoax Call Challenge. Looking at the way in which RBFRS receives emergency calls that may be hoaxes.
- Review attendance to incidents on motorways. In partnership with the Thames Valley Police (TVP), to reduce the number of unnecessary fire appliances from attending incidents where their attendance is not required.
- To develop data collection to more effectively target community safety initiatives and to enable a more focussed and flexible use of resources.
- Refine and develop consultation and communication strategies with external and internal stakeholders.

Parts of the aims and outcomes identified in the IRMP include changes in the RBFRS culture and move towards an organisation based upon the principles of corporate governance. The action plan in year one, and all subsequent action plans, will include these aims and outcomes as a generic part of the review process.

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Expansion of co-responder schemes (providing an emergency response with defibrillators for heart attack victims) in partnership with the Royal Berkshire Ambulance NHS Trust.

<p>Background</p>	<p>RBFRS has one co-responder scheme in operation at present, based at Mortimer. The defibrillator is mobilised by Fire Control when a call is received from Royal Berkshire Ambulance Trust.</p> <p>Two part-time fire fighters respond by car from the fire station to the suspected heart attack victim to administer emergency treatment until a Paramedic reaches the scene. These firefighters would normally crew the fire appliance. Crewing levels are monitored to ensure that sufficient firefighters are still available to crew the fire appliance to respond to emergency calls.</p> <p>On average, these firefighters will arrive to administer emergency treatment within 5 to 7 minutes. Berkshire Ambulance Trust has identified their attendance times to this area as 10 to 20 minutes. They have also identified opportunities to extend this service to other areas of Berkshire in partnership with RBFRS.</p> <p>During the past 18 months RBFRS have been mobilised on 18 occasions to suspected heart attack victims and have successfully administered emergency treatment 10 times.</p>
<p>Outcome</p>	<p>To increase this service to the community in partnership with the Royal Berkshire Ambulance Trust.</p> <p>To provide a quicker first response than is currently available to heart attack victims in areas of need identified by the Ambulance Service.</p>
<p>Strategic Aim</p>	<p>Reduce the number of deaths caused by hazards other than fire and to render humanitarian services.</p> <p>Demonstrate continuous improvement in service delivery, based upon consultation and partnership working, within a best value framework.</p>
<p>Anticipated Benefits</p>	<p>Earlier interim patient care</p> <p>Enhanced inter-agency working</p> <p>Enhanced community safety</p> <p>Additional competencies for fire service personnel</p>

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Review response to automatic fire alarms.

Background

On average RBFRS attends 4,000 calls to automatic fire alarms each year, of which the vast majority prove to be false alarms.

These have a major impact on the Service and cause concern for the following reasons:

- These false alarms divert essential resources, rendering them unavailable, with the possibility of delayed attendance to further calls.
- Mobilising creates risk to fire crews and members of the public when appliances are responding under emergency conditions.
- They are disruptive to work routines, particularly training and community safety activities.
- The effect on personnel attending a high number of false alarms is demoralising.
- They impose an additional financial burden on the Service, particularly in respect of part-time turnout fees and fleet costs.
- Increased overtime payments for staff.
- They adversely impact upon the employers who release part time staff for operational duties.

Unwanted alarm signals cause problems for occupiers of premises in terms of lost production and general disruption to business continuity. They result in complacency amongst staff, thereby reducing the effectiveness of the alarm system, i.e. staff fail to respond appropriately to an alarm activation.

Outcome

To reduce the number of false alarm calls by appropriate risk treatment utilising Community Safety, Fire Safety, Intervention and liaison with occupiers and other agencies.

Strategic Aim

Deliver community safety education, tailored to users' needs, to reduce the number of fire calls and to minimise the consequences of fire.

Demonstrate continuous improvement in service delivery, based upon consultation and partnership working, within a best value framework.

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Review response to automatic fire alarms.

Anticipated Benefits

A risk assessed approach based on the occupancy type of the building and the time of day may permit a reduction in the number of appliances attending and a consequential decrease in appliance movements, thereby freeing up resources for community safety activity.

Reduce the risks to attending crews and other road users during emergency response.

Maintain the availability of appliances to respond to other emergencies.

Reduce the impact on employers who allow their staff to respond as part-time firefighters during working hours.

Reduce intervention costs.

Reduce the impact on business and the community.

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Review response of aerial appliances to incidents.

Background	<p>RBFRS has a policy of mobilising aerial appliances, which is not always based on risk. On average, over the past three years, aerial appliances were automatically mobilised to fire calls on 830 occasions and were used on 25 occasions.</p> <p>Unnecessary mobilising of aerial appliances has a major impact on the service and causes concern for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They divert resources, rendering them unavailable with the possibility of delayed attendance to genuine calls. • Mobilising creates risk to fire crews and members of the public when appliances are responding under emergency conditions. • They are disruptive to work routines, particularly training and community safety activities. • They impose an additional financial burden on the service due to fleet costs.
Outcome	<p>To mobilise aerial appliances to emergency calls based on risk. For example, a high rise office building occupied during the day may present a high risk and the attendance of an aerial appliance may be required.</p> <p>However, during the night it may be un-occupied, thus reducing the risk significantly. This may give the opportunity of reducing the attendance of an aerial appliance during this low risk period.</p>
Strategic Aim	<p>Deliver community safety education, tailored to users' needs, to reduce the number of fire calls and to minimise the consequences of fire.</p> <p>Demonstrate continuous improvement in service delivery, based upon consultation and partnership working, within a Best Value framework.</p>
Anticipated Benefits	<p>Reduced demand on the Service, thereby freeing up resources for community safety activity.</p> <p>Reduce the risks to attending crews and other road users during emergency response.</p> <p>Maintain the availability of appliances to respond to other emergencies.</p> <p>Reduce intervention costs.</p>

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Focused recruitment and retention strategy for fire stations that utilise on call (part time firefighters), making appropriate use of the new flexibility in conditions of service.

<p>Background</p>	<p>Both wholetime and part-time firefighters are employed by RBFRS. Wholetime firefighters are employed on a full-time basis, most working 2-day and 2 night shifts per tour of duty on a fire station.</p> <p>Part-time firefighters are employed on a part-time basis and respond to an emergency call by reporting to the fire station from either their place of work or home address.</p> <p>Most part-time firefighters are attached to a fire station that is usually situated in a rural area providing the local community with an emergency service. Part-time crews have an important role in supporting the whole of the county in the event of a major emergency.</p> <p>Due to the high cost of living in Royal Berkshire and the changes in lifestyles and work patterns, it has become more difficult to recruit and retain part-time firefighters. This is a particular problem during the day, as the vast majority of people work away from the area where they live.</p> <p>During 2002/2003, 18% of part-time fire appliances were un-available during the day due to firefighters being un-available to crew the fire appliances.</p>
<p>Outcome</p>	<p>To increase the availability of part-time firefighters and the appliances they crew.</p>
<p>Strategic Aim</p>	<p>Minimise loss of life, injury and damage from fire.</p> <p>Reduce the number of deaths caused by hazards other than fire and render humanitarian services.</p> <p>Demonstrate continuous improvement in service delivery, based upon consultation and partnership working, within a best value framework. Be a good employer and be recognised as such.</p>
<p>Anticipated Benefits</p>	<p>Maximise part-time availability of appliances, enhancing community safety.</p> <p>Increase flexibility for both wholetime and part-time personnel to enhance service delivery. For example, spare wholetime crew members being detached from their station and sent to a part-time station to ensure the fire appliance is available.</p>

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<p>Hoax Call Challenge. Looking at the way in which RBFRS receives emergency calls that may be hoaxes.</p>	
<p>Background</p>	<p>RBFRS receives emergency calls and dispatches resources to them via a Control Room crewed by dedicated staff on a shift-system providing a 24-hour service.</p> <p>The system of sending resources is based on predetermined attendances. This means that when a call is received, the Control Operator will mobilise resources to the incident using a computer system, that will automatically suggest resources and, once confirmed by the operator, will send them.</p> <p>On average, over the past three years, RBFRS has responded to 900 hoax/ dubious calls per year. Hoax/ dubious calls have a major impact on the service and cause concern for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They divert resources and render them unavailable, with the possibility of delayed attendance to genuine calls. • Mobilisation creates risk to fire crews and members of the public when appliances are responding under emergency conditions. • They are disruptive to work routines, particularly training and community safety activity. • The effect on personnel attending a high number of hoax/dubious calls is demoralising. • They impose an additional financial burden on the service, particularly in respect of part- time turnout fees and fleet costs. • Increased overtime payments for staff. • They adversely impact upon the employers who release part- time staff for operational duties. <p>Hoax and dubious calls may disrupt commercial, academic and community life.</p>
<p>Outcome</p>	<p>To reduce the instances when resources are mobilised to hoax calls and calls of a dubious nature, based on call-challenge by Control Room personnel.</p>

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Hoax Call Challenge. Looking at the way in which RBFRS receives emergency calls that may be hoaxes.

<p>Strategic Aim</p>	<p>Minimise loss of life, injury and damage from fire.</p> <p>Reduce the number of deaths caused by hazards other than fire and render humanitarian services.</p> <p>Deliver community safety education, tailored to users' needs, to reduce the number of fire calls and to minimise the consequences of fire.</p> <p>Demonstrate continuous improvement in service delivery, based upon consultation and partnership working, within a Best Value framework.</p>
<p>Anticipated Benefits</p>	<p>Reduced demand on the Service thereby freeing up resources for community safety activity.</p> <p>Reduce the risks to attending crews and other road users during emergency response.</p> <p>Maintain the availability of appliances to respond to other emergencies.</p> <p>Reduce the impact on employers who allow their staff to respond as part-time firefighters during working hours.</p> <p>Reduce intervention costs.</p> <p>Reduce the impact on business and the community.</p>

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<p>Review attendance to incidents on Motorways. In partnership with the Thames Valley Police (TVP), to reduce the number of unnecessary fire appliances attending incidents where their attendance is not required.</p>	
<p>Background</p>	<p>During the past three years, on average, RBFRS have attended 1,560 incidents per year on motorways in Berkshire.</p> <p>Depending on the location and information provided, up to 4 emergency vehicles may be mobilised. On many occasions this attendance is required but there are others when it is not. This may be due to the incident not being as serious as first reported by the caller.</p> <p>There is an opportunity to reduce this attendance whilst appliances are en-route to the incident. In partnership with TVP, who often reach the scene of an incident first, can re-assess and downgrade the scene to a 'minor incident', this will enable appliances not required to be made available quicker for other emergencies.</p>
<p>Outcome</p>	<p>To implement a risk-based approach to incidents on motorways in partnership with TVP.</p>
<p>Strategic Aim</p>	<p>Minimise loss of life, injury and damage from fire.</p> <p>Reduce the number of deaths caused by hazards other than fire and render humanitarian services.</p> <p>Demonstrate continuous improvement in service delivery, based upon consultation and partnership working, within a Best Value framework.</p>
<p>Anticipated Benefits</p>	<p>Possible extension of the policy to roads other than motorways.</p> <p>Improved inter-agency & partnership working.</p> <p>Reduced demand on the Service thereby freeing up resources for community safety activity.</p> <p>Reduce the risks to attending crews and other road users during emergency response.</p> <p>Maintain the availability of appliances to respond to other emergencies.</p>

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To develop data-collection to more effectively target community safety initiatives and to enable a more focussed and flexible use of resources.

<p>Background</p>	<p>RBFRS already has in place well developed Management Information Systems (MIS). It is now necessary to collect additional data to confirm and ensure better use of resources, and to provide evidence for any proposed changes to community safety.</p> <p>The data collected will help to further develop risk maps for the area. Their use is vital in identifying, supporting and developing any improvements to the way we deliver our service to the community.</p>
<p>Outcome</p>	<p>The ability to better assess our risks, based on maps and other information. To further develop the MIS to capture data required to improve the way we deliver our service and to make our community safer.</p>
<p>Strategic Aim</p>	<p>Minimise loss of life, injury and damage from fire.</p> <p>Reduce the number of deaths caused by hazards other than fire and render humanitarian services.</p> <p>Deliver community safety education, tailored to users' needs, to reduce the number of fire calls and to minimise the consequences of fire.</p> <p>Demonstrate continuous improvement in service delivery, based upon consultation and partnership working, within a Best Value framework</p>
<p>Anticipated Benefits</p>	<p>Production of risk maps to enable improved targeting of resources.</p> <p>Identification of areas that are at additional risk and instigate community safety initiatives to drive down this risk.</p> <p>Improved inter-agency & partnership working, with exchange of information and risk intelligence.</p> <p>Reduced demand on the Service, thereby freeing up resources for additional community safety activity.</p> <p>Identify trends, and target community safety initiatives accordingly.</p>

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Refine and develop consultation and communication strategies with external and internal stakeholders.

<p>Background</p>	<p>As well as a requirement to produce an IRMP and a Year One Action Plan, there is a requirement to consult stakeholders. RBFRS already have a strategy to consult stakeholders on these plans.</p> <p>It is also a requirement to consult stakeholders on subsequent action plans and on any proposed changes to the way the Service is delivered to the community.</p> <p>It is this continuing consultation with both external and internal stakeholders that will be refined and developed.</p>
<p>Outcome</p>	<p>To develop and implement an appropriate consultation strategy.</p> <p>To amend any proposed changes to the way the Service is delivered to reflect the views of stakeholders where appropriate.</p>
<p>Strategic Aim</p>	<p>Deliver community safety education, tailored to users' needs, to reduce the number of fire calls and to minimise the consequences of fire.</p> <p>Demonstrate continuous improvement in service delivery, based upon consultation and partnership working, within a best value framework.</p> <p>Be a good employer and be recognised as such.</p>
<p>Anticipated Benefits</p>	<p>Engagement of stakeholders to ensure the widest possible range of data and views.</p> <p>Enables the Service to respond to local needs and wishes.</p> <p>Greater community participation and a more open exchange of views, to give credibility to the consultation process.</p> <p>Maintain ongoing dialogue with the community to assist in any change process.</p>