



R B F & R S

news release

22/06/2010

No: 27/F&R

FOUR HORSES SAVED IN STABLE FIRE

Firefighters from Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) saved four horses from a fire in a block of stables last night (21 June).

Crews from Mortimer, Dee Road, Whitley Wood and Wokingham Road plus one pump from Hampshire attended the incident at Paices Hill, Aldermaston at just after 11pm last night. The horses were in a block of stables and were trapped by the fire. Eight firefighters in breathing apparatus, two hose reels, a jet and a hydrant were used to deal with the fire.

Large animal rescues can be extremely hazardous, not least of all because distressed animals can cause serious injuries to themselves, fire crews and other people around them. RBFRS used new animal rescue training techniques to rescue the horses, as Group Manager Martin Vile explains:

“All of our operational crews have now received animal rescue training and six RBFRS officers have been trained in advanced techniques, including animal handling skills. An animal rescue officer is sent to every incident involving large animals and we carry a range of equipment including horse headcollars and lead ropes, which were used at this incident to lead the horses to safety.

“One horse suffered burns to its hindquarters but the specialist equine vet who attended the incident has confirmed that its prognosis is good. RBFRS now has a specialist large animal rescue unit based in Reading, which can be deployed to any location in Berkshire and the surrounding areas. We are also investing in a wider range of specialist kit, including a quick-release lifting bar, harnesses, strops and a mud lance to make animal rescues not only more effective but safer for crews.”

One crew is still at the scene this afternoon to cool an acetylene cylinder that was also involved in the fire.

ENDS.