

Annual Report

2013/14

Action Plan

2014/15



**ROYAL BERKSHIRE
FIRE AUTHORITY**

MAKING BERKSHIRE SAFER

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Foreword

Welcome to the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Annual Report and Annual Action Plan which supports the delivery of our Corporate Plan.

We are very pleased to be jointly introducing this important document that looks back at what was achieved over the last 12 months, and also looks forward by setting out details of our plans for the year ahead. At a time when downward pressure on public sector finances continues to increase, it is really important that we are clear about how best to use the resources we do have available in keeping people across Royal Berkshire safe. The processes that support the preparation of this document are intended to achieve just that.

Last year (2013) was a busy one for Royal Berkshire's Fire and Rescue Service. As well as dealing with 'business as usual' and taking forward a number of major projects, the winter months saw firefighters working hard to protect communities from the effects of serious flooding. The year also marked the retirement of Chief Fire Officer Iain Cox – after over 30 years of dedicated service to the people of Royal Berkshire and the appointment of his successor (one of the authors of this Foreword!).

The year ahead promises to be one of the most significant in the history of Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service. It is a year that will see several of the major projects we have been working on brought to fruition.

A new Headquarters will open in the Calcot area, close to Junction 12 of the M4. As well as providing a modern building from which Headquarters staff will be able to provide better support to those that deliver services to our communities, the building will become home to a new, state-of-the-art fire control service for the Thames Valley.

Fire control operators in the new facility will have very sophisticated technology at their disposal – technology that will assist them to do an even better job of supporting firefighters when dealing with emergencies across Royal Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. We will also be opening a new fire station in Windsor; enabling us to sell the previous fire station site and, in doing so, make finance available for investment in other building projects, one of which will involve replacing the existing fire station on our Dee Road, Headquarters site in Reading.

Finally, 2014 will be a year in which the Service prepares for the future. Alongside all other public sector organisations, the fire and rescue service in Royal Berkshire will face very significant challenges. In recognition of that fact, councillors on the Fire Authority have reviewed and revised their policy direction, to reflect the circumstances in which we find ourselves, and to set an agenda intended to ensure that our fire and rescue service contributes as broadly as possible to ensuring that people in Royal Berkshire are able to lead safe and fulfilling lives.

That policy agenda will be translated into a programme of work that will make a real difference in the years ahead – a programme of work that will be shaped by our staff, colleagues from partner organisations and people from the communities we serve.

We hope that you find the content of the document interesting and informative and are keen to hear your views about it.

Please let us know what you think, or ask us any questions by contacting us through our website: www.rbfrs.co.uk



Councillor Colin Dudley

*Chairman
Royal Berkshire Fire
Authority*



Andy Fry

*Chief Fire Officer and Chief
Executive
Royal Berkshire Fire and
Rescue Service*

यदि आप यह जानकारी हिन्दी में चाहते हैं तो कृपया हमारा संपर्क करें
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Jeśli wymagasz tej informacji po POLSKU, proszę się z nami skontaktować

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Your Fire and Rescue Service

Royal Berkshire Fire Authority

Royal Berkshire Fire Authority is responsible for the running of Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service. It has a legal duty to ensure that an effective fire and rescue service is provided across Berkshire.

The Authority is known as a Combined Fire Authority, which means it is made up of twenty five elected councillors from the six Unitary Authorities in Berkshire (Bracknell Forest, Slough Borough, Reading Borough, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, West Berkshire and Wokingham). The current Chairman is Councillor Colin Dudley, of Bracknell Forest Council.

The main duties of the Fire Authority are set out in the Fire and Rescue Services Act (2004) which requires it to provide, train and equip the Service for:

- Firefighting
- Protection of people and property
- Fire safety promotion
- Road traffic collision rescues
- Other emergency responses to civil emergencies.

The Authority also has roles and responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to work in partnership to plan and respond to civil emergencies and, since 2010, there has been local agreement to promote the wider use of sprinklers.

The Authority has a number of committees which oversee the running of Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service, ensuring it meets both statutory requirements and the needs of Berkshire's communities. Authority meetings take place every three months and are open to the public.

Find out more about the Fire Authority via this website link:

www.rbfrs.co.uk/fire_authority.asp

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service

The Service is responsible for providing 24-hour cover for the whole of Berkshire (125,914 hectares in size); from Langley and Slough in the east of the county to Lambourn and Hungerford in the west.

We have 18 fire stations and employ more than 626 staff. We currently have 385 wholetime uniform staff, 75 retained firefighters, 27 members of staff in our Control Room and 139 non-uniform staff who, together, serve a population of more than 860,000 people (note some of these are dual contract posts).

Berkshire includes one of Europe's busiest motorways, the M4, and heavily populated urban centres such as Reading and Slough. There are busy commercial and industrial centres, contrasted with less-densely-populated rural areas and a large number of lakes, rivers and canals. Last year, we answered around 14,169 emergency calls and attend around 5,925 emergencies, including 362 traffic collisions.

Our role is much broader than putting out fires and dealing with emergencies. We also work to prevent the need for emergency assistance, using a combination of public information and education linked to risk identification and analysis.

Our vision, mission and strategic commitments

Our vision is to have a “Safer Berkshire” and our organisational mission is:

“To contribute to a safer society by minimising the incidence of death, injury and damage to property from fire and other emergencies”

We have six Strategic Commitments (listed below) which provide focus for our activities and help deliver our vision.

Strategic Commitments

1. Minimise loss of life , injury and damage from fire, road traffic collisions and other hazards.
2. Improve public and business safety and reduce risk, through targeted education and enforcement of fire safety legislation.
3. Demonstrate continuous improvement and efficiencies ensuring consultation and partnership working.
4. Be an employer of choice, offering equality of opportunity and development to all.
5. Provide resilient emergency response through risk management and planning
6. Conduct activities in an environmentally sustainable way.

These commitments provide a focus for our activities and help deliver our vision and were first laid out in our Corporate Plan 2011-2015 but have gone through minor revisions over the years to account for major changes.

Corporate strategy

The Corporate Strategy (summarised overleaf) identifies the key outcomes and priority projects for 2014/15; this forms the basis of the Action Plan. We have created a clear link between outcomes and measuring success to ensure we achieve our Vision of a Safer Berkshire.

The 2014/15 Action Plan covers the final year of the current Corporate Plan and work has already begun with members to create a new plan to take us forward.

Corporate Strategy for 2014/15

Theme	Outcome	Aim	We will measure success by	2014/15 priority projects
Prevention	A Berkshire safe from fires, traffic collisions or other hazards	Reduce the risk that fire and other emergencies pose to the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing the number of fires (property/vehicle and others) Reducing the number of accidental fires in dwellings Reducing the number of deliberate fires Minimising deaths and casualties from dwelling fires Reducing the number of malicious false alarms Reducing the number of fires where no smoke alarm was fitted. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Deliver fire control arrangements for the Thames Valley 2 Relocate to a new Brigade HQ 3 Determine future arrangements for Dee Road Fire Station 4 Relocate to Fire Station in Tinkers Lane, Windsor
Protection	Risk and vulnerability to fire in business and communal premises are managed	Reduce risk and actively enforce fire safety in business and communal premises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing the number of false alarms (Automatic Fire Alarms) at commercial premises Reducing the number of fires in buildings (non-dwellings, covered by the Regulatory Reform Order legislation) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5 Ensure sustainable arrangements are in place for establishing, maintaining and using effective IT infrastructure
Response	Effective response to fires, traffic collisions and other emergencies	Minimise loss of life, injury and damage from fire, road traffic collisions and other emergencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing the percentage of incidents where the first appliance attends within 10 minutes Increasing the percentage of incidents where the first appliance attends within 10 minutes and the second in 12 minutes Increasing the percentage of RTCs attended within 11 minutes Increasing the percentage of dwelling fires that are confined to the room of origin 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6 Complete a review of the fire cover in the east of the County 7 Introduce comprehensive and robust performance management arrangements
Use of Resources	Efficient use of resources	Efficient use of public funds Maintain user satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimising expenditure per head of population Managing risks to the organisation Reducing the number of complaints received from the public Reducing CO₂ emissions from RBFRS property and vehicles Increasing the level of satisfaction with RBFRS service provision Understanding feedback from the public by monitoring compliments and complaints. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8 Develop a shared procurement service with Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service 9 Conduct a staff engagement programme about the future direction of RBFRS 10 Complete and introduce a Property Asset Management Plan 11 Review and determine response standards
People	Have a safe, competent and motivated workforce where there is opportunity for all	Employ and train people with the right skills and attitude to deliver high quality services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing the number of health and safety events Reducing the number of working days lost to short term sickness (all staff) Increasing the percentage of eligible staff with Performance Development Interviews (PDIs) complete Increasing the percentage of Black & Minority Ethnic staff recruited Decreasing the number of individual staff with complaints as a proportion of the workforce Increasing the percentage of leavers who would recommend RBFRS as an employer Maintaining the number of essential operational-based training courses delivered. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12 Review crewing levels on front line appliances 13 Review the role of retained firefighters 14 Review Corporate Risk Management 15 Implement outcomes from the IRMP Learning and Development Review

Our values

We believe that the way in which we work is as important as our achievements. Our values reflect how we strive to achieve our purpose in all that we do and they are detailed in a Brigade Charter. Our values are:

- **Trust.** Building trust with integrity and in a manner that holds loyalty and mutual respect
 - **Honesty.** We expect and give honest and open communication
 - **Inclusivity.** Everyone should have the opportunity to be engaged, listened to and involved in the work of the Service
 - **Equality.** The needs of different groups receive equal consideration
 - **Openness.** All parties should understand the constraints and pressures on individuals and the organisations but positive and constructive challenges should be welcomed.
- A Community Engagement and Equality Working Group, which is chaired by a Member of the Fire Authority. One of the group's key roles is to focus on identifying opportunities for engaging with Berkshire's varied communities. This has also seen a broadening of our volunteer programme.
 - Working with partner organisations to join-up services where possible, including the involvement of communities across Berkshire
 - We aim to hold Community Engagement Forums to gather views from members of the public on our activities and projects.

As part of this work, we are always on the lookout for people who would like to become retained firefighters or work for us as community volunteers.

More information about this can be found at: www.rbfrs.co.uk (follow these links to the 'vacancies' or 'volunteering' web pages).

Communities and equality

To better understand the needs of those we serve and ensure the most vulnerable in society get access to the services they need we aim to involve our communities whenever possible.

To help achieve this, we have put the following arrangements in place:

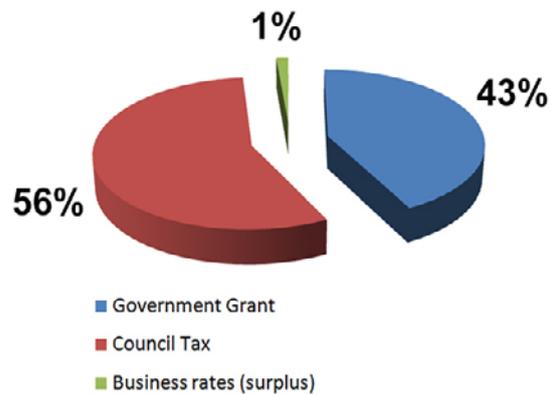
To ensure we know how well we are doing to meet the expectations of the community we serve, we measure ourselves against the targets we have set. These targets monitor compliments, complaints and after incident service satisfaction.

Financial resources

The Royal Berkshire Fire Authority budget for 2014/15 is £34.38 million, down from £34.5 million in 2013/14. The 2014/15 budget comes from three sources;

1. Government Grant, which is £14.61 million in 2014/15.
2. Berkshire residents' contribute £19.3 million through their Council Tax.
3. For the first time this year, the localisation of business rates (where Local Authorities receive a proportion of rates) has meant the Fire Authority will receive £473,000 from a surplus of business rates generated by local economic growth.

For 2014/15, the Government grant of £14.61 million is 7.7% lower than the previous year. The proportion of each funding stream for 2014/15 is shown in the chart below.



Our Approach to Risk

Integrated Risk Management Planning

National requirements mean that every Fire and Rescue Authority in the country should ensure that local plans are tailored to meet local needs. Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service has produced a **Five Year Integrated Risk Management Plan**. The plan identifies the measures that Royal Berkshire Fire Authority proposes to improve the safety and well-being of Berkshire's communities and visitors, matched with demand and available resources and responsive to local needs. It also takes into account the commercial, economic, environmental and heritage concerns of the six Unitary Authority areas in Berkshire. The aim of our Integrated Risk Management Plan is to deliver the **Right Resources** at the **Right Time**, in the **Right Place** and within our available budget.

Underpinning the five year plan is an annual action plan. Previously the plan has been produced as a standalone document, this year however it has been incorporated within this 2014/15 Corporate Plan. The work plan will outline the matters to be considered or reviewed by the Service.

The changed approach enables a greater degree of alignment of corporate projects and also reduces the need for several documents referencing the same issues to be produced. Although the process of producing the annual plan has changed, the well established approach to managing risk will remain. Some projects will still require a three month public consultation exercise to ensure the communities views are accounted for in the decision making process.

The aim of the Integrated Risk Management Planning process is to:

- Reduce the occurrence of fires and other emergency incidents
- Reduce loss of life in fires and accidents
- Reduce the number and severity of injuries in fires and other emergency incidents
- Reduce the commercial, economic and social impact of fires and other emergencies
- Safeguard our environment and heritage
- Provide value for money

Understanding risk

Analysis of past events and incidents, coupled with demographic information, analysis of the built environment and consideration of likely future requirements, all contribute to a high level of risk knowledge. To ensure wider risk management is accounted within the IRMP process reference is also made to the **Community Risk Register** that is maintained by the Local Resilience Forum for the Thames Valley area. In addition use is also made of Mosaic data bases and referrals from other agencies, to enable action to be taken to prevent those people most at risk in the community from having an accident or becoming injured as a result of a fire.

The approach taken toward risk is to target our activities carefully to prevent incidents from occurring, but also ensure resources are in the right location to best protect the community if an emergency occurs. The aim is to **improve** public safety, **reduce** the number of emergency incidents and **save** lives.

Resilience arrangements

Fire and Rescue Services are required to have resilience arrangements in place to ensure it can respond to either major emergencies or continue to operate in the event of a health pandemic e.g. flu.

Royal Berkshire Fire Authority (RBFA) has mutual aid agreements with each of the neighbouring fire and rescue services whereby:

- In the event of a significant emergency, RBFA can request additional resources from neighbouring fire authority
- Should the address of an emergency be closer to a fire engine from a neighbouring fire authority, a request will be made for that fire engine to attend the incident.

Specialist equipment and trained personnel can also be requested from other fire and rescue services to attend significant emergencies in Berkshire. In the event of a national emergency elsewhere in the country, RBFA has the following specialist resources that can be deployed to assist those in need:

- An incident response unit, to support a large scale hazardous substance incident
- A high volume pump, to support a large scale flooding incident
- A water rescue unit, to support rescues from large scale flooding incidents

Protection

In order to maximise the benefits of the limited resources available within the Fire and Rescue Service, a risk based inspection programme is undertaken for the high risk non domestic premises within Berkshire.

During 2013/14 the Protection Department team has:

- Completed 2,413 risk based inspections
- Seen a 19% reduction in the number of fires in commercial premises
- Completed 96% of post-fire inspections (in commercial buildings) within two working days
- Undertaken five prosecutions - which resulted in three guilty pleas, with the offenders paying fines and costs totalling £126,655

Based upon the current risk information the focus of the 2014/15 inspections will be toward high risk premises. If inadequate standards are identified action will be taken to remedy the situation and where necessary enforcement action will be taken.

Prevention

The Prevention Department is divided into three specialist teams, each focused on a key area of activity in Making Berkshire Safer.

Home Fire Safety Check Team

During 2013/14 the Service completed 5,690 Home Fire Safety Checks and installed 5,600 smoke detectors. Of these, 80% were targeted toward higher risk members of the community e.g. the elderly, people with disabilities and people referred by agencies such as Social Services. The remaining 20% were carried out in areas where dwelling fires had occurred.

Risk Reduction Team

This team works with all sections of the community to deliver safety messages in support of the Service's targets to reduce accidental and deliberate fires. Team members also work with groups, supporting people who have physical or learning disabilities and those with mobility problems.

Safer Communities Coordinators

Safer Communities Coordinators link the Prevention department with our fire stations and the six Berkshire Unitary Authorities. They provide each Fire Station Commander with a detailed profile that enables firefighters to focus on areas where prevention activity is needed most.

During 2013/14 we delivered a number of campaigns including delivering messages to reduce the number of outbuilding fires, supporting Electrical Fire Safety Week by encouraging people to take steps to reduce the risk of having an electrical fire in the home and providing safety advice during the

prolonged period of flooding. We also attended a large number of events to promote safety, and a bumper stand showcasing the best of the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service at the Royal County of Berkshire Show gave visitors the chance to interact with firefighters and community advisers through safety demonstrations, a hazard house and guidance including why to test smoke alarms and the importance of having an escape plan

In addition to identifying Home Fire Safety Checks, our volunteers are continuing to help to deliver Young Firefighter and public information events. Volunteers have been trained to take the Service's outreach vehicles into the community.

This year we will be reviewing our delivery plan aimed at focussing on the high quality targeted Home Fire Safety Checks.

Response

A number of projects were undertaken during 2013/14, which focused on the emergency response side of the Service. The project outcomes are:

Emergency Cover Arrangements

A wholetime crewed fire engine has been provided at Newbury Fire Station, which has improved the level of emergency cover in the west of the County area. The additional resource has removed the need for the retained crewed fire engine, which has been withdrawn from service.

Undertake a Review of Fire Cover in the East of the County Area

A detailed review has been undertaken and reported to the Fire Authority. The review identified the affect of Wokingham Fire Station becoming fulltime crewed, in 2011 has resulted in an improved level of emergency cover in the Bracknell area. As a result a recommendation has been made to propose the removal of the retained fire engine from Bracknell. The full time fire engine however will remain at Bracknell Fire Station to ensure the response standards are maintained.

If the recommendation is supported a public consultation will take place enabling comments to be received from the communities of Berkshire.

The review also identified a need to enhance the emergency cover arrangements in the Ascot area. Work will therefore continue in 2014/15 to identify options for consideration by the Fire Authority.

Day Crewing Plus Shift System

The advantages and disadvantages of providing emergency firefighters using this shift system were assessed and considered by members of the Fire Authority. Based upon the report outcomes, it was decided not to proceed with this shift option, however work was commenced on alternative ways to crew fire engines in Berkshire. The work is completed and the project outcomes will now be implemented by way of the relevant processes.

Windsor Fire Station Crewing

Fire cover in the Windsor area is currently provided by a fire engine crewed by firefighters from Slough fire station. A fire station has been provided by the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, which is where the fire engine and crews are based.

Multi Role (Command) Vehicle

The relocation of the Heavy Rescue Unit to Dee Road Fire Station has increased the workloads of firefighters who work there. A review of the impact of the additional workloads has not yet commenced - However will be incorporated within a wider review of emergency cover within the County.

Other projects

Off Road Fire-fighting Capability

Using the outcomes of the Swinley Forest fire in 2011, a technical specification for a specialist off road vehicle was produced. The vehicle has been procured and we are currently awaiting delivery.

Theale Fire Station

Work to identify a suitable site is still underway, however the current availability of a suitable site with the opportunity for planning permission for a new fire station is proving to be difficult. A further review of available sites is currently underway. Should the provision of a suitable site not be forthcoming and accounting for the continued deterioration of the current Dee Road Fire Station building, alternative options will need to be considered.

Review of Fire Cover from Pangbourne and Mortimer Fire Stations

Work on this project cannot commence until the Dee Road Fire Station project has identified the site for the new building.

Risk Location of Wholetime Fire Engines

Work on this project was not commenced in 2013/14 due to other higher priority work. The scope of this project will therefore be incorporated within the 2014/15 review of the Fire Authority Response Standards.

Training resources Review

The outcomes of the project were considered by the Service's Corporate Management Team. It is now necessary for the Learning and Development managers to produce an implementation plan, which will include reference to any premises matters to enable consideration within the premises asset management plan.

Review of Prevention and Protection

Both of these departments' functions were considered as part of the austerity measures. At this time the changes have been postponed and will be considered as part of a wider Service review in the future.

Projects for 2014/15

Where indicated the above projects will be rolled forward into the 2014/15 work plan. In addition the following three projects will be included in the 2014/15 work programme:

- **Response Standards**

To review the current RBFA response standards to incidents to ensure they are still fit for purpose. The review will include benchmarking against other Fire and Rescue Services' standards, the wider inclusion of community safety measures and the local needs of Royal Berkshire communities. The review will also consider if the standards, which only currently cover fires in Dwellings and Road Traffic Collisions where people are trapped should be widened to include other types of incidents. The review will also enable future planning arrangements regarding the location of fire stations to be made.

- **Crewing Levels**

To review the crewing levels on front line fire engines. Currently front line fire engines can have a crew of between four and six firefighters. This review will determine the minimum number of firefighters that should be provided on each appliance, which will feed into how many fire fighters are required to provide the front line service establishment and may result in financial efficiencies.

- **Review the role of RDS firefighters within Berkshire**

Following the retained review in 2010, it is necessary to undertake an evaluation of progress against the determined project outcomes and consider matters affecting the provision of retained firefighter cover since the implementation of the 2010 project.

Annual Report

2013/14



Annual Report: overall picture of 2013/14

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Annual Report: overall picture of 2013/14

Introduction

Welcome to the Annual Report 2013/14 for Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service.

This report provides information on our activities throughout the year, including operational incidents, significant events and details of our work in Berkshire's communities. Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service is your Fire and Rescue Service so we hope you find this report informative and interesting. If you have any questions or would like to let us know what you think, you can contact us using via the website: www.rbfrs.co.uk/how_to_contact.asp

This year has seen the Service deal with a couple of large scale incidents, including a fire in an empty building in Windsor which needed 10 of our appliances to successfully bring it under control, but it was the winter storms that brought widespread flooding across the county that presented us with some of our biggest challenges. We helped our local communities prepare for flooding by distributing sandbags and getting personal belongings to higher ground, we carried out over a hundred rescues / evacuations, we delivered vital supplies to those cut-off by water and we worked with partners to protect areas of critical infrastructure. We worked with fire and rescue services from the length of the country to support flooding relief efforts across Berkshire but we were also able to help others and supplied resources to Brigades dealing with flooding in the Somerset Levels.

Sitting alongside these large-scale incidents and the every-day challenges of delivering fire and rescue service to Berkshire we were presented with an additional challenge of maintaining the service throughout periods of industrial action. Several periods of strike action followed a dispute between the Government and the Fire Brigades Union over changes to pensions, we responded by maintaining a resilient response at all times.

Annual Report: overall picture of 2013/14

Scale of Demand



The chart below (Figure A) illustrates the demand for our services; they show that the number of calls we receive and the number of emergencies we attend is going down over time (figures correct to end Q3).

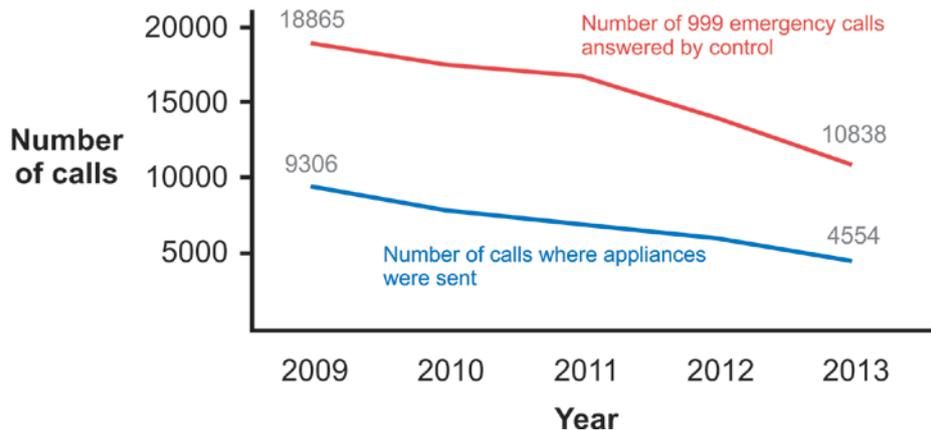


Figure A

The following chart (Figure B) shows the continued reduction in significant and more life threatening emergencies (figures correct to end Q3).

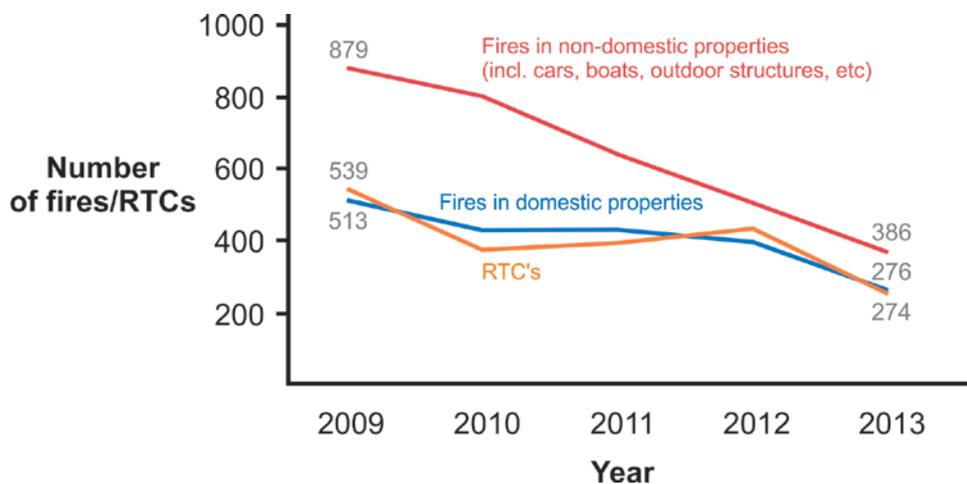


Figure B

The reduction in the number of incidents we attend means our operational station-based staff can do more in other areas; such as working with the community to provide safety advice. On the other hand, this reduction does mean that there are fewer opportunities for crews to gain operational experience and so we need to ensure we have enhanced training in specialist areas as the case study overleaf illustrates.

Case Study



A Partnership Approach to Training

Finding a way to keep training relevant, fresh and affordable, is a challenge facing fire services across the UK. Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service's Head of Learning and Development, Area Manager Gene Ashe, said: "The downward trend in incident numbers, decreasing budgets and the changing profile of operational response mean that traditional training models may no longer deliver the type of training that we need.

"It is important to ensure that training is a genuine learning experience – anyone using the same training environment over and over again is going to get used to it, no matter how varied the scenario.

"We had to come up with an idea to find alternative, experiential training for our firefighters and that meant looking at alternative means of training."

One example of this arose via the Bracknell Forest Partnership. The town centre Regeneration Partnership offered the use of a number of empty retail buildings in the town centre for use as a live fire training venue, prior to their demolition.

This was too good an opportunity to turn down and so fire crews from across Berkshire were able to train in a variety of realistic scenarios, including urban search and rescue, shoring and breaching up of collapsed buildings and the use of heavy rescue equipment in confined spaces. This sort of large-scale training is just not possible at the RBFRS training facility at Whitley Wood.

AM Ashe said the town centre location was also ideal for developing the advanced skills in urban search and rescue that the fire service is increasingly called upon to deliver.

With the pilot such a success, he hopes to replicate the partnership approach to training in other parts of Berkshire: "This just goes to show that our involvement in partnerships in Berkshire can offer genuinely innovative opportunities to do things in a different way."

Annual Report: overall picture of 2013/14

Added value of our Service



We aim to be as efficient as possible in our operations, but we also support efficiency in the wider economy. Fire costs the economy in terms of damage to property and injury to people and the cost of fire to industry and individuals in Berkshire is huge. However, the work that we do to prevent fires and protect property, combined with effective operational response, contributes towards reducing the overall cost of fire.

As previously noted the number of property fires we attend has been falling over the last few years. This is due partly to our prevention and protection work.

We calculate the economic cost of fire based on government values, including not only fire damage but also casualties and deaths. As can be seen in the graph and table below there is an overall reduction on the economic cost of fire in Berkshire due to our activities.

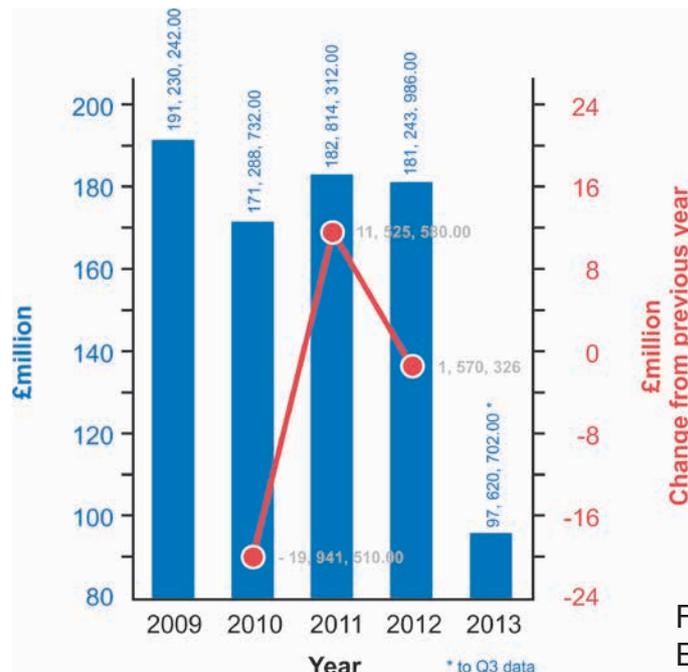


Figure:
Economic cost of fire

Annual Report: overall picture of 2013/14

Performance and Progress



This section illustrates how we performed against the themes in last year's Corporate Plan; both in terms of the targets we set ourselves for 2013/14 and how the associated projects progressed to help achieve our strategic commitments.

The table overleaf gives a sense of our overall performance in 2013/14 against our targets - more detail is given in the themed sections that follow.



Major Incident Flooding in Berkshire

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) set up its Operations Support Room (OSR) on 8 February 2014 in response to widespread severe flooding across the county. Severe (risk to life) flood warnings had been issued for the Thames, including many areas in Berkshire. Around 540 properties were badly affected and RBFRS firefighters were carrying out rescues, evacuation and welfare activity in the worst-affected areas.

The flooding also resulted in power outages, road closures, fallen trees, damage to buildings, sewage contamination and loss of fresh water supplies. RBFRS was operating at Condition Red and a 'Major Incident' for flooding was declared across the Thames Valley.



RBFRS resources, including fire engines with 4x4 capability, were deployed to key locations across

the county, whilst duty officers used 4x4 vehicles to respond to calls. The RBFRS High-Volume Pump (HVP) was requested by the National Coordination Centre and sent to Somerset to help with pumping operations on the Somerset Levels. As flooding continued to worsen in Berkshire, the decision was made to request national assets to assist and these resources were increased as flooding spread across the county.

At the height of the flood response operation, there were 32 fire and rescue services working in Berkshire, including firefighters and officers, water rescue teams, boats, both powered and non-powered, fire engines and HVPs. National specialist and tactical advisers were working with crews and also in the RBFRS OSR. Around 260 operational personnel were out dealing with floods, in addition to RBFRS firefighters and officers.

Fire crews worked with the military, transporting, filling and distributing sandbags and assisting in the construction of flood defences and also carried out pumping where vital infrastructure was at risk, as at Pingewood electricity substation and rail networks. Firefighters also provided training to military personnel on hazard awareness when working or moving through flood water.

Assistance was given to local authorities and health care providers by delivering urgent supplies, including

medicines, evacuating residents and transporting nurses and carers by boat to their patients. For those people unable or unwilling to leave, firefighters carried out extensive salvage and recovery operations in flooded communities, including helping residents to move furniture and valuables to dry areas. Prevention (community safety) staff worked from RBFRS outreach vehicles, providing a contact and advice point for local people, as part of the multi-agency community support programme.

Fire crews were working in physically demanding conditions and volunteers from the British Red Cross and Salvation Army worked tirelessly to cook and serve thousands of hot meals. They based mobile catering units at fire stations and also provided packed lunches and homemade cakes to ensure that firefighters unable to get to one of the catering units during their shift didn't go hungry. Many local people and businesses also provided food and drinks to the hard-working crews in gratitude for their efforts.

Safety messages were pushed out via press coverage and advertising and focused on not driving through floods,

carbon monoxide awareness when using pumps, generators and heaters and warnings to keep children away from floodwater during half-term. Fire and rescue, police, ambulance, health trusts, local authorities and agencies shared information to support a clear message to members of the public. However, many drivers continued to attempt to drive through deep floods, ignoring road closed signs and subsequently required rescue by firefighters.

High-profile media interest resulted in politicians descending on the area en masse and the floods remained the focus of national news coverage for over a week. RBFRS officers took part in community meetings in Wraysbury and Datchet and several national broadcast interviews for television and radio.

Feedback from local people was very positive, with dozens of emails and letters from members of the public thanking fire crews for their hard work and reassurance.

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	Measure	2012/13 Actual	2013/14 Target	2013/14 Actual	Comments
Prevention	1. Number of property/vehicle (primary) fires	934	1,024	921	The target has been exceeded. The main reasons are joined up work with our partners and improved safety education and awareness work carried out by the service.
	2. Number of deliberate property/vehicle (primary) fires	185	285	175	The target has been exceeded. The main reasons are joined up work with our partners and improved safety education and awareness work carried out by the service.
	3. Number of deliberate other (secondary) fires	301	570	300	The target has been exceeded. The main reasons are joined up work with our partners and improved safety education and awareness work carried out by the service.
	4. Number of accidental dwelling fires	373	360	361	<p>The target has been narrowly missed by one dwelling fire.</p> <p>Overall whilst the target has not been achieved the actual number of accidental dwelling fires has continued to reduce year on year with 2013/14 seeing 12 fewer dwelling fires than in 2012/13.</p> <p>This target is closely linked to the number of Home Fire Safety Checks carried out. To improve the performance we intend to significantly increase the numbers of Home Fire Safety Checks we will carry out this year.</p> <p>We are also working with our partners to improve the information to aid identification of occupants and premises most "at risk" of fire.</p>
	5. Number of deaths from fire	7	0	4	<p>This target has been missed. The Service sets a zero target for fire deaths. RBFRS cannot achieve this on our own as such we are working actively with our partners to achieve a joined up approach to achieve this target.</p> <p>This target is also influenced by the number of Home Fire Risk Checks the target for which is being stretched to increase a substantial increase in 2014/15.</p>

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	Measure	2012/13 Actual	2013/14 Target	2013/14 Actual	Comments
Prevention	6. Number of casualties from fire	33	33	30	The target has been exceeded. The main reasons are joined up work with our partners and improved safety education and awareness work carried out by the service especially in areas such as Home Fire Safety Checks.
	7. Number of malicious false alarms	100	100	94	The target has been exceeded. The main reasons are joined up work with our partners, mobile phone operators and improved safety education in schools and awareness work carried out by the Service.
	8. Percentage of dwelling fires where no smoke alarm was fitted	19%	15%	16%	The target has been missed. It relates to 68 properties not having smoke alarms.
	9. Number of Home Fire Safety Checks carried out	4696	6000	5958	<p>This target has been narrowly missed. There is a delay of 2 weeks in collating the data. As this is one of the principal intervention methods in continuing to drive down the number of dwelling fires, injuries and deaths from fires and improve the number of dwellings where there is a working smoke alarm fitted.</p> <p>The service has set a stretch target of achieving a significant increase in the number of Home Fire Safety Checks it will carry out in 2014/15.</p>

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	Measure	2012/13 Actual	2013/14 Target	2013/14 Actual	Comments
Prevention	10. Percentage of Home Fire Safety Checks completed in 'at risk' properties	74.5%	100%	77.9%	This target has not been achieved. We strive to complete 100% of checks in at risk properties rather than any property. This is not always achieved when properties are deemed to be a lower risk. Work is ongoing with our risk identification system and partners to ensure we can more easily identify and focus on those high risk premises.

	Measure	2012/13 Actual	2013/14 Target	2013/14 Actual	Comments
Protection	11. Number of Automatic Fire Alarms (AFAs) attended	1171	1000	1012	This target has not been met. A stretch target has been set next year to reduce the number of automatic fire alarms. This is linked to ongoing work with fire alarm companies and the occupiers of the premises who call the fire service out.
	12. Number of fires in non-domestic properties	161 (using similar measure)	160	150	The target has been exceeded. The main reasons are the ongoing work by the RBFRS Protection department, improved safety education and awareness work carried out.
	13. Number of risk-based inspections	2500	2500	2620	The target has been exceeded.

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	Measure	2012/13 Actual	2013/14 Target	2013/14 Actual	Comments
Response	14. Percentage of dwelling fires attended with the first appliance within 10 minutes	94%	94%	96%	This target has been met. there were 13 fires where we did not attend with the first appliance within 10 minutes.
	15. Percentage of dwelling fires attended with the first appliance within 10 minutes and the second within 12 minutes	88%	85%	92%	The target has been exceeded - due to the improved fire cover achieved at Newbury. This means there were 27 fires that were not attended with the first appliance within 10 minutes and the second within 12 minutes.
	16. Percentage of Road Traffic Collisions attended within 11 minutes	92%	90%	93%	This target has been met. This represents 11 RTC where we did not attend within 11 minutes.
	17. Percentage of dwelling fires contained to the room of origin	88%	90%	86%	This target has been missed. This relates to 49 dwellings where the fire was not contained to the room of origin. Work is ongoing to improve this in 2014/15. This will also be influenced by the increase in Home Fire Risk Checks carried out in high risk premises.

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	Measure	2012/13 Actual	2013/14 Target	2013/14 Actual	Comments
Use of Resources	18. Expenditure per head of population	£39.86	£39.92	£39.27	Target met.
	19. Total risk score (measures level of organisational risk, aiming to keep risks as low as possible)	70	70	88%	Target missed. Full details are provided in the following section.
	20. CO ₂ emissions from Authority operations	1794 tonnes	1927 tonnes	1798 tonnes	Target met.
	21. CO ₂ emissions from building use	808 tonnes	1193 tonnes	1114 tonnes	Target met.
	22. Compliments from the public	58	61	52	Monitored information
	23. Percentage of domestic respondents satisfied with overall service	100%	96.5%	100%	Target met.
	24. Complaints from the public	26	28	28	Monitored information

	Measure	2012/13 Actual	2013/14 Target	2013/14 Actual	Comments
People	25. Number of RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) accidents and dangerous occurrences	10	10	12	Target missed. The target of 10 derives from the number of RIDDOR events in 2012/13, which was a historical low, when compared with the preceding two years with 24 and 29 incidents respectively. The reduction in RIDDOR events was due to a change in the statutory reporting criteria and a significant reduction in the number of reportable breathing apparatus failures.
	26. Number of injury accidents (including RIDDOR)	80	80	117	Target missed. The downward trend seen over the last 3 years has reversed this year and the target has not been met. When compared with the previous year, the trend is one of increasing minor injuries whilst undertaking routine activities or training. <i>See main text for further detail.</i>

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	Measure	2012/13 Actual	2013/14 Target	2013/14 Actual	Comments
	27. Number of near miss accidents	64	48	48	No longer a target.
	28. Number of working days lost to short term sickness	(target changed for 2013/14)	5.1	4.3	Target met.
	29. Number of ill health retirements	1	0	1	Target missed. Unfortunately this means a member of staff has been retired on ill-health grounds.
	30. Percentage of eligible staff with completed Performance Development Interviews (PDI's)	85.4%	100%	70%	Target missed and performance has declined. The reason can be attributed to non completion of the process in some cases i.e. the PDI was undertaken but documentation was not forwarded to enable the event to be recorded. In addition, initial investigation suggests where managers have left and interim managers appointed, they may not be familiar with requirements. (Also see note on left).
	<p><i>NOTE: Some managers undertook the PDI for 2013/14 before 1st April 2013; as such these were discounted from the return. A review of the PDI process and the mechanism for submitting PDI records is being undertaken.</i></p>				
People	31. Percentage of staff from ethnic minorities	5%	5%	5%	Target met.
	32. Percentage of staff recruited from ethnic minorities	0%	14%	0%	Target missed. Target was set on historical population. Data to be reviewed.
	33. Percentage of female firefighters	3.6%	4%	3% (14 female firefighters)	Target missed due to staff turnover and limited operational recruitment.
	34. Percentage of female firefighters recruited	0%	15%	0%	Target missed due to limited operational recruitment. To be reviewed.
	35. Percentage of staff making a complaint	New measure	2.2%	2.3%	Target narrowly missed due to small numbers involved.
	36. Percentage of leavers recommending RBFPS	New measure	69%	76% (19 staff)	Target met.
	37. Risk critical operational training completed for available personnel	New measure	100%	85%	Target missed. Until August 2013 100% of risk critical training had been delivered. As a result of industrial action by the FBU and the consequential need to provide Emergency Fire Crew training from August to November 2013, and adverse weather in early 2014 it was not possible to complete planned training. Action has been taken to ensure that any outstanding risk critical training for the 2013/2014 year will be completed by May 2014.

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Performance against the Prevention theme



By preventing as many emergency situations as possible, we can help minimise the loss of life, injury and damage. We would like to see a Berkshire where no one suffers injury or death from fires, road traffic collisions or other hazards. We set ourselves the following indicators against the “Prevention” theme and this is how we performed:

Strategic Commitment: Minimise loss of life, injury and damage from fire, road traffic collisions and other hazards.

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
No more than 1024 property / vehicle (primary) fires	921	

There are five separate categories of primary fires:

1. Accidental Dwelling Fires
2. Accidental Fires in buildings that are not dwellings
3. Accidental Vehicle Fires
4. Accidental Fires that take place outdoors
5. Deliberate primary fires.

Performance in each category is monitored closely to ensure that the Service's Prevention activities are targeted and effective.

The number of primary fires continues to fall and as was the case last year, it is the reduction in deliberate that has had the biggest impact on the reduction in the numbers of fires primary fires that has most impact on figures.

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
No more than 285 deliberate primary fires	175	

Prevention activities continue to be delivered to reduce fire setting behaviour including school education delivery, the Firesetter Programme, and partnership working with the Police and local councils. Fire Investigation Officers continue to work successfully with the Police to identify and ultimately prosecute and sentence arsonists.

Similar to last year there has been a 40% reduction in deliberate primary fires.

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Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
No more than 570 deliberate other fires	300	

The trend for the reduction in other deliberate fires e.g. fires involving rubbish and grass etc. has continued on from the previous year with a further 40% reduction in the number of fires. Activities have continued to be delivered with the aim of educating the public, and in particular children and young people of the dangers of fire setting. In addition, partnership working with local councils and the Police is often successful in reducing the potential for fire setting e.g. the collection and removal of rubbish, and the early identification of derelict and unsecured buildings.

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
No more than 360 accidental dwelling fires	361	

The target has been narrowly missed by one dwelling fire.

Overall whilst the target has not been achieved the actual number of accidental dwelling fires has continued to reduce year on year with 2013/14 seeing 12 fewer dwelling fires than in 2012/13.

This target is closely linked to the number of Home Fire Safety Checks carried out. To improve the performance we intend to significantly increase the numbers of Safety checks we will carry out this year. Work is also ongoing with our partners to improve the information to aid identification of occupants and premises most “at risk” of fire.

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
Zero fire deaths	4	

This target has been missed. The Service sets a zero target for fire deaths.

Each fire death is thoroughly investigated to identify any actions that could have been taken to prevent the death. Of the four deaths that occurred we have identified they all had different circumstances, but generically all four involved vulnerable members of the community, who were known to other agencies or organisations within Berkshire.

This reinforces the fact that it is essential for organisations to share information about vulnerable people. In order to achieve this we are working actively with our local partners to implement the lessons identified after each fire death and carry out a joined up preventative approach to enable targeted Home Fire Safety Checks by our staff.

The target is also heavily influenced by the number of Home Fire Safety Checks carried out to target, educate and protect those people who are identified as most at risk from fire. As part of the overall approach to achieve the zero fire death target the number of Home Fire Safety Checks carried out by RBFRS staff is being increased substantially in 2014/15.

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Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
No more than 33 casualties in dwelling fires	30	

The on-going efforts to improve the targeting of home safety advice, to reach the most vulnerable in our society, have resulted in a reduction in the number of casualties in dwelling fires.

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
No more than 100 malicious false alarms	94	

Strategies for reducing malicious false alarms continue to be very successful. The number of malicious false alarms occurring is now at an all time low.

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
No more than 15% of dwelling fires attended where there was no smoke alarm fitted	16%	

The target has been missed. This target reflects the number of fires in dwellings that RBFRS attend where it is identified post fire that there are no smoke alarms fitted to alert the occupants of the fire.

This target is closely linked to the target for the number of Home Fire Safety Checks RBFRS carries out each year and the target to ensure that these checks are carried out in premises where the occupants are “at risk” from fire. Any dwelling where there is no smoke alarm will put the occupants “at significant risk” in the event of a fire.

To improve our performance we are working with our partners’, especially local authorities and housing associations, as well as implementing our own safety education and awareness programmes to ensure all dwellings in Berkshire have a working smoke alarm fitted.

As part of this programme RBFRS is significantly increasing the number of Home Fire Safety Checks carried out each year in peoples’ homes.

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
At least 6000 HFS interventions	5958	

The Service has maintained the number of Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC) provided but has increasingly targeted homes identified as high-risk. When all data is returned it is expected that the target will be met.

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
100% of Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC) in “at risk” premises	77.9%	

This target is aspirational and has not been achieved.

We aspire to complete 100% of Home Fire Safety Checks in “at risk” properties rather than any property. The primary reason that this target has not been achieved is based on post visit information when the occupants who were initially identified to be at risk are following the inspection deemed not to be “at risk”.

To improve the performance on this target work is ongoing with our risk identification system and local partners to ensure we can more easily identify and focus on those high risk premises.

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Case Study



Prevention Pensioner

A home fire safety check and friendly advice from Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) firefighters paid off for a Reading pensioner recently when her dishwasher caught fire.

Firefighters had visited her home a year before the fire and had also installed two smoke detectors. When the dishwasher caught fire and the alarms activated she remembered their advice and shut all the doors in the house before getting outside and calling 999.

The crew that attended the scene said her actions had saved the property from far worse smoke and heat damage and they were able to clear smoke from the rest of the house using a positive pressure ventilation fan.

RBFRS Group Manager Paul Jacques, said: "This goes to show how vital the home fire safety check scheme is. This lady did absolutely everything the firefighters had talked to her about which meant that her home suffered the minimum of damage and, most importantly, she is safe and well.

"We target our visits to households which need them the most and it is a real boost when they show such direct benefits. Our firefighters and Prevention teams carry out hundreds of these every year and this is a great example of why the service is so necessary."

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Performance against the Protection theme



We are committed to improving public safety. We continue to support businesses to improve their fire safety through targeted education and enforcement of fire safety legislation. This is how we performed against the “Protection” indicators we set ourselves for 2013/14:

Strategic Commitment: Improve public and business safety and rescue risk, through targeted education and enforcement of fire safety legislation.

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
Maximum of 1000 Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) false alarms	1012	

This target has been narrowly missed by only 12 incidents. Although the target has been missed we are pleased that there has been a significant actual reduction of 159 alarm incidents attended this year against the previous year’s figure adding to the continued long term downward trend.

A stretch target has been set for 2014/15 to reduce down the number of automatic fire alarms still further. This is linked to ongoing work with fire alarm companies and the occupiers of the premises who call the fire service when an alarm operates.

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
Maximum of 160 fires in non domestic premises	150	

The number of fires occurring in non domestic premises has fallen. Prevention and protection activity is being reviewed to determine the most effective joint approach to reducing this figure even further.

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
Complete a minimum of 2500 risk based fire safety inspections in commercial properties	2620	

This target has been exceeded. This improvement has been achieved as a result of the collaborative and focused work of the Service and our partners.

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Performance against the Response theme



We are committed to planning and preparing for emergencies. We recognise that we cannot prevent every emergency but we will provide a resilient response. This is how we performed against the “Response” indicators we set ourselves for 2013/14:

Strategic Commitment: Provide resilient emergency response through risk management and planning.

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
Maintain or improve performance on the first appliance arriving at a dwelling fire within 10 minutes on 94% of occasions	96%	

Our verified performance has improved to 96%, improving on last year’s performance. We verify this because a number of factors can influence the final figures. This represents the 13 fires where we did not attend with the first appliance within 10 minutes.

This improved performance is primarily as result of the upgrading of the second appliance at Newbury to wholetime crewing coupled with robust management of emergency cover arrangements across the Service.

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
Maintain or improve performance on the first appliance arriving at a dwelling fire within 10 minutes and the second within 12 minutes on 85% of occasions	92%	

Our verified performance has improved to 92%, improving on last year’s performance by 4%. We verify this because a number of factors can influence the final figures. This represents 27 fires that were not attended with the first appliance within 10 minutes and the second within 12 minutes.

This improved performance is primarily as result of the upgrading of the second appliance at Newbury to wholetime crewing coupled with robust management of emergency cover arrangements across the Service.

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Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
Maintain or improve performance on attending Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) within 11 minutes on 90% of occasions	93%	

This target has been met. We have improved our performance against last year. There were 11 RTC's where we did not attend within 11 minutes.

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
Containing dwelling fires to the room of origin on at least 90% of occasions	86%	

This year has seen a decline on this target achieving it on 86% of occasions. This relates to 49 dwellings where the fire was not contained to the room of origin.

Dwelling fires within Berkshire have reduced by 35% in 10 years; despite this our performance has not improved in this area. As a result a full review of our performance in this area is underway. The outcomes are not yet known but any lessons identified and recommendations to improve performance will be implemented.

Performance against Use of Resources theme



We are committed to using our financial resources and physical assets in a way which flexibly, efficiently and effectively improves our services, taking account of the impact on the environment. This includes having effective procurement processes, matching resources to risk, managing risk and performance and achieving sustainable use of resources. To help achieve this, we set ourselves the following performance indicators and targets against “Use of Resources”. The following outlines the targets we set in 2013/14 and how we performed and includes a look at three targets we introduced for the first time last year to monitor that we are still maintaining the satisfaction levels within the community we serve:

Strategic Commitment: Demonstrate continuous improvement and efficiencies, ensuring consultation and partnership working.

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
Expenditure per head of population must not exceed £39.92	£39.27	

We have a statutory duty to balance our budget and we have once again achieved that this year.

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
Maintain a Risk Management value of 70	88	

Risk to RBFRS decreased on levels seen in 2012/13, which was 89, but overall risk is still above the target of 80 set in 2011.

During 2013/14 risk within RBFRS increased in the following areas; Industrial Action, Information Systems/Information Management and Occupational Road Risk, all contributing to missing the target. As the industrial action is a national issue, it is beyond the immediate control of RBFRS. However contingency plans are in place to provide operational cover during periods of strike action.

The risk arising from the information systems is predominantly related to the Thames Valley Fire Control IT systems. A dedicated team are actively addressing the issues in this area. As the risk from occupational road risk was identified as being significant, a task group comprising of managers from relevant specialist areas was established. The group have identified a number of areas of best practice from other organisations and are also considering introducing technology on RBFRS vehicles to reduce risk in this area.

In May 2013 RBFRS officers also identified that the process of risk management within RBFRS was in need of a fundamental review. As such it was decided to include the issue of risk management within the Operational Peer Review, which was due in September 2013, however due to the industrial action the peer review was postponed until Feb 2014. An internal audit has also been undertaken of risk management and confirmed a number of improvements are required. An improvement plan has been established.

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Strategic Commitment: Conduct our activities in an environmentally sustainable way

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
Reduction of CO₂ from building use to 1193 Tonnes	1114 Tonnes	

We strive to make our services energy efficient and want to reduce the amount of CO₂ produced from building use. This year we have installed insulation in the roofs of Crowthorne and Maidenhead Fire Stations, installed A-rated gas boilers (replacing old, oil-fuelled boilers) in Maidenhead and Bracknell Stations and included insulation in new wall cladding at Mortimer Station.

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
Reduction of CO₂ from authority operations use to 1927 Tonnes	1798 Tonnes	

We work to reduce the amount of CO₂ our operational activity (including the use and operation of our vehicles) produces. Some of this occurs naturally as the number of incidents we attend reduces.

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The following three measures monitor user satisfaction and whilst not directly related to a specific strategic commitment they provide an external view of the Service's performance

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
Monitor the amount of compliments and letters of thanks received compared to 61 in 2012/13	52	

This was a new area to monitor for 2013/14. This measure records the number of personal letters and compliments received into the Service following any form of service activity. The overall number of compliments received is a representation of public recognition for the services they have received and reflects the professionalism that staff of RBFRS provides to the community of Berkshire.

Public compliments are particularly received for the work of fire crews at emergencies as well as for staff who advise the public on the risks of fire and the how to prevent fires starting.

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
Increase the percentage of people satisfied with our quality of service following a fire from 96.5%	100%	

This was a new target for 2013/14. We use an independent research company (ORS Ltd) to survey occupiers of properties following fires, both domestic and non-domestic properties. We ask "taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service you received from the Fire and Rescue Service". We are striving to increase overall satisfaction levels.

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
Monitor the number of formal complaints received from the community compared to 28 in 2012/13	28	

This was a new area to monitor for 2013/14. We occasionally receive complaints where our activities have caused a member of the public to register their dissatisfaction. We have a formal process to investigate and communicate our findings with the complainant. When we began monitoring this in 2012/13, we received 28 complaints. As part of the complaints process a review is undertaken to establish if improvements can be made in the service, to reduce the likelihood of a similar complaint being made in the future.

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Performance against the People theme



We know that staff and volunteers represent our greatest asset and we need the right people in place, with the right skills to deliver on all of our commitments.

The following outlines our targets against “People” in 2013/14 and how we performed:

Strategic Commitment: Be an employer of choice, offering equality of opportunity and development for all

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
Maximum of 10 RIDDOR (Reporting of injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) accidents and dangerous occurrences	12	

This target has not been met. The target of 10 derives from the number of RIDDOR events in 2012/13, which was a historical low, when compared with the preceding two years with 24 and 29 respectively. The reduction in RIDDOR events was due to a change in the statutory reporting criteria and a significant reduction in the number of reportable breathing apparatus failures.

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
Reduce the number of injury accidents (including RIDDOR) year on year from a baseline of 80 at the end of 2012/13	117	

The downward trend seen over the last 3 years has reversed this year and the target has not been met. When compared with the previous year, the trend is one of increasing minor injuries whilst undertaking routine activities or training.

Notable increases in this current year were seen in the months of July and October. 17 injuries were sustained during July, all but one occurred whilst carrying out routine activities or training, with 11 being minor injuries. 14 injuries were sustained in October, again all but one occurring whilst carrying out training or routine activities, with 10 being minor injuries. During this year it was necessary to train Emergency Fire Crews. These are people selected and trained to provide emergency cover during the periods of industrial action and are not professional fire-fighters. During their training there were 12 accidents, 10 of which were minor injuries only.

With the majority of these accidents being of a minor nature, there will be a greater emphasis made towards the importance of safe behaviour in the workplace. An attitudes and behaviour survey will be made and results used as a focus for developing an action plan to raise awareness and improve performance.

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Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
Number of “near miss” accidents	48	

Management information only with no target set. Although there was a reduction in the number of near miss reports, this was not the desired outcome, especially when considering the number of minor accidents for the year. The usual hierarchy is a decreasing number of events from near misses, to minor accidents to major accidents.

Although the target was missed RBFRS are encouraged that staff are reporting minor accidents, which previously were likely to have been reported as a near miss e.g. paper cuts, slight burn from a photo copier, minor scald from hot water when making porridge, cramp in hand, minor graze to leg, grit blown into eye and others.

RBFRS will continue to encourage reporting of minor accidents and near misses, assess trends and take action as required.

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
Reduce the number of working days lost to short term sickness year on year from 5.1 per employee in 2012/13	4.3 days	

This target has been met.

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
Number of ill health retirements	1	

Regretfully, one ill health retirement was necessary in the year 2013/14.

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
Performance Development Interviews (PDIs) for 100% of eligible staff complete in last 12 months	70%	

Target missed and performance has declined. The reason can be attributed to non completion of the process in some cases i.e. the PDI was undertaken but documentation was not forwarded to enable the event to be recorded. In addition, initial investigation suggests where managers have left and interim managers appointed, they may not be familiar with requirements.

NOTE: Some managers undertook the PDI for 2013/14 before 1st April 2013; as such these were discounted from the return. A review of the PDI process and the mechanism for submitting PDI records is being undertaken.

Annual Report: overall picture of 2013/14

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
5% staff in post from ethnic minorities	5%	

At the six month period 5.1% of all staff are from black and ethnic minority groups.

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
14% of new staff recruited from ethnic minorities	0%	

Target missed. There was a very low level of recruitment during the year and of those recruited 28% chose not to comment on their ethnicity. This target was set by the Community Engagement and Equalities Group (CEEG) and will be reviewed in July 2014 for future years.

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
Women being 4% of existing Firefighters	3% (at 30/9/2013)	

There have been no wholetime recruitment campaigns in the period and therefore there remain limited opportunities to improve this performance whilst we continue experience to experience natural staff turnover. The target was set by the Community Engagement and Equalities Group (CEEG) and will be reviewed in September 2014 for future years.

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
Women being 15% of new Firefighter recruits	0%	

Whilst we have not recruited new female firefighters, one Retained Duty System female firefighter has transferred to wholetime service. The target was set by the Community Engagement and Equalities Group (CEEG) and will be reviewed in September 2014 for future years.

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
Reduce the number of staff making complaints as a proportion of the workforce from 2.2% in 2012/13	2.3%	

Target narrowly missed. This may be due to the small numbers involved.

Annual Report: overall picture of 2013/14

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
Increase the percentage of leavers that would recommend RBFRS as an employer year on year from 69% in 2012/13	76%	

As staff leave RBFRS they are given the opportunity to make comments about their employment. One of the questions they are asked is whether they would recommend RBFRS as an employer. The target was exceeded, which reflects the service in a good light.

Target from 2013/14	Results from 2013/14	3 Year Trend
Complete 100% of risk critical operational training	85%	

The Learning and Development department have developed training modules which allow front line staff to maintain their competence. The modules cover a variety of training skills which are essential for ensuring community safety is maintained. Examples of some of the training undertaken are:

- Compartment Fire Behaviour Training
- Road Traffic Collision Training
- Emergency Fire Appliance Driving
- Breathing Apparatus Training
- Water Rescue Training

Between April 2013 and August 2013, 100% of risk critical training was delivered to all staff that were available for training. We planned to deliver 100% of risk critical training for the rest of the year but following the Fire Brigades Union notification to the Service of the intended Industrial Action, training planned for August, September and October 2013 was cancelled to allow for three Emergency Fire Crew courses to be delivered. In addition to the industrial action, significant flooding in January and February 2014 impacted upon the Service's ability to deliver 100% of planned training.

Following a return to normal operations, a revised training plan was implemented which has ensured that 85% of the operational work force received risk critical training. Staff that were unavailable for training due to long-term illness, annual leave or attendance at external courses will complete outstanding training by May 2014.

Annual Report: overall picture of 2013/14

Case Study



Call handlers: preparing for spate conditions

When Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) is experiencing exceptionally high levels of demand, whether due to ongoing operations such as those required in the recent county-wide flooding, or a single large-scale incident such as Swinley Forest, it is not only firefighters who are called upon for extra effort to support service provision to the public.

Many 'behind the scenes' specialist and support staff not only have to work longer hours to ensure that the organisation continues to function effectively but many also have a second string to their bow and are able to help out with tasks not connected with their usual role.

One example of this is the group of non-operational staff who are trained in call management, to help in fielding the vast number of non-operational phone calls that can otherwise interfere with the Control Room's primary duties.

Training is comprehensive and covers a varied programme, including the Call Handling process, use of the RBFRS purpose-built major incident management system, input, a live call handling exercise, website and social media updating, familiarisation and set-up of the Operations Support Room and use of the paging arrangements, followed by a visit to the Control Room.

Simon Smith, the officer coordinating the training, said: "We are lucky in that they are all experienced members of staff who not only know the Brigade well but are all accustomed to dealing with members of the public and in handling a variety of situations. They perform well and, when the time comes, we are confident that they will be a real asset and will definitely enhance our ability to handle spate calls and large-scale emergencies."

Annual Report: overall picture of 2013/14

Projects



Performance of projects over 2013/14

All of the projects below were undertaken during 2013/14 however some will rollover into 2014/15 years due to the size and complexity of the projects. Projects are progressed in collaboration with partners where appropriate and always through multifunctional teams to identify areas for improvement.

The nine key projects for 2013/14 were:

1. Plan and realise savings to meet the budget
2. Collaboration with Oxfordshire FRS and Buckinghamshire FRS for a new Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS)
3. Refurbishment and relocation to a new Brigade Headquarters building
4. Plan, build and move to a new fire station (Station 21)
5. Find an acceptable solution to Windsor Fire Station issues
6. Complete the 2012 restructure
7. Explore and pursue options for transport and fleet maintenance contract
8. Ensure supporting IT systems (e.g. FireWatch and Performance systems) are efficient and effective
9. Undertake a review of fire cover in the east of the County area

The following pages provide updates for each of these projects. By referring to the priority projects for 2013/14 in the action plan section of this document, it can be seen that project numbers: 2,3,4,5, 8 and 9 are progressing and will continue into 2014/15.

Annual Report: overall picture of 2013/14

Plan and realise savings to meet the budget

We said:

Planning to manage the challenging funding cuts from central government has been underway for many months. The plans were agreed by the Fire Authority in February and work to achieve the savings will continue throughout the year.

Intended outcome:

To meet the 2013/14 budget following a reduction in Government Grant.

We did:

We identified a number of projects to meet the funding gap and delivered each of them.

Actual outcome:

We have balanced the budget for 2013/14.

Collaboration with Oxfordshire FRS and Buckinghamshire FRS for a new Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS)

We said:

This ongoing project, with Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service and Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service will provide a joint control and mobilising function for all three Thames Valley counties. It will be housed in our new HQ building in Calcot.

Intended outcome:

The provision of a new joint Control Room that will deliver a modern, world class facility to the residents and visitors of all three counties. Enhanced facilities will enable a faster response to incidents, improve resilience and provide risk critical information to our staff to ensure a better, safer service.

We did:

The Project is progressing well and is scheduled to deliver in the last quarter of 2014. A new computer mobilising system has been ordered and work is ongoing to align operational procedures between the three counties.

Actual outcome:

A Fire Control room with modern fixtures and technology will be delivered for Royal Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire in the last quarter of 2014.

Annual Report: overall picture of 2013/14

Refurbishment and relocation to a new Brigade Headquarters building

We said:

The current Headquarters building is no longer fit for purpose and would be too expensive to refurbish. We have purchased an existing office building which will be refurbished to house the Service and the new Thames Valley Fire Control, for the next thirty years or more.

Intended outcome:

The refurbishment build contract to be let and works progressed such that practical completion will complete early in the 2014/15 financial year.

We did:

The contract for refurbishment was let in July 2013 and although there have been some issues and delays in the delivery of individual trades and work packages, the project is substantially on time and on budget and will be completed early in the 2014/15 financial year.

Actual outcome:

The works have been progressed such that practical completion will take place early in the 2014/15 financial year.

Plan, build and move to a new fire station in the Theale area

We said:

To provide a new fire station and rescue training facility in the Theale area to replace the current station in Dee Road, Reading. The Fire Authority approval of a £5 increase in our precept means that we can make this necessary investment without the Authority having to borrow money.

Intended outcome:

To identify a site to build a new fire station in the Theale area.

We did:

Commissioned a refresh of the original site search that was undertaken in 2011 to understand what potential sites might be available for the new fire station.

Actual outcome:

Work to refresh the site search is underway and will be substantially completed by the end of February 2014, which will then start to inform our strategy and options for relocation going forward.

Annual Report: overall picture of 2013/14

Find an acceptable solution to Windsor Fire Station issues

We said:

A joint approach with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead to establish a new fire station in the Windsor area. The implementation of this new satellite station, crewed with firefighters from Slough Fire Station, will be completed this year.

Intended outcome:

To identify a solution for maintaining an RBFRS presence in Windsor and vacating the Station in St Mark's Road.

We did:

Working in partnership with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead we have now progressed with the relocation project. Work will start in the spring with the aim to go operational in November 2014.

Actual outcome:

An agreement is in place between RBFA and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and work is expected to begin in the Spring. We anticipate to go live in November.

Complete the 2012 restructure

We said:

The restructure was implemented in 2012. With the retirement of the Chief Fire Officer in 2013 there is now an opportunity to review how the new structure is working and to fill any vacant posts.

Intended outcome:

To appoint new a Chief Fire Officer at the head of RBFRS.

We did:

We ran a process to identify, select and appoint a new Chief Fire Officer. Andy Fry was appointed and took up the post in October 2013.

Actual outcome:

A Chief Fire Officer was appointed with effect from October 2013. We continue to examine organisational resourcing need and ensure we adequately structures to provide effective service whilst balancing this with the financial challenges.

Annual Report: overall picture of 2013/14

Explore and pursue options for transport and fleet maintenance contract

We said:

Some of the work to identify the most efficient way to maintain our vehicle fleet has already been completed. A proposal to work closely with a neighbouring Fire and Rescue Service to share maintenance facilities and so reduce costs will be finalised in 2013.

Intended outcome:

To identify and provide efficient, effective and economical maintenance of our fleet.

We did:

We have formed a partnership with Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service. We have carried out a review and identified the most efficient and cost-effective way to maintain our vehicle fleet is to partner with Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service. This partnership went live on 1 January 2014.

Actual outcome:

We have a partnership in place that has started to deliver efficient, effective and economical maintenance of our fleet.

Ensure supporting IT systems (e.g. FireWatch and Performance systems) are efficient and effective

We said:

We have several IT systems that allow recording and monitoring of our performance. These systems also allow us to oversee projects and initiatives to ensure they are on track. This project will ensure that our IT systems are efficient and effective.

Intended outcome:

Provide support and reporting of RBFRS services and their performance.

We did:

We implemented two major updates to the IBIS (Integrated Building Information System) to enhance delivery to our Prevention and Protection Departments.

We have started a project to improve the use of Scorecard for performance management. We have also evaluated, gained approval for and commenced recruitment of a dedicated 'Business Support Team' whose objective will be to deliver improved use of, reporting of and delivery of the core systems that support both head office functions and core Fire and Rescue delivery.

Actual outcome:

Scorecard is now fully supported and technically managed by the Strategy and Performance Review team. There is an interim arrangement in place for supporting FireWatch.

Annual Report: overall picture of 2013/14

Undertake a review of fire cover in the east of the County

We said:

Following the decision to make Wokingham Fire Station full time emergency cover from October 2011, it has been identified that the fire engine based at this station can get to some incidents quicker than Bracknell's retained fire engine.

In addition there have been difficulties recruiting retained firefighters at Ascot Fire Station, despite several recruitment campaigns.

Intended outcome:

Undertake a review of emergency response to identify options to provide optimum emergency cover in the east of the county area.

We did:

We are in the process of completing a comprehensive review of fire cover in the east of Berkshire.

Actual outcome:

Review expected to report in early spring with options for public consultation.



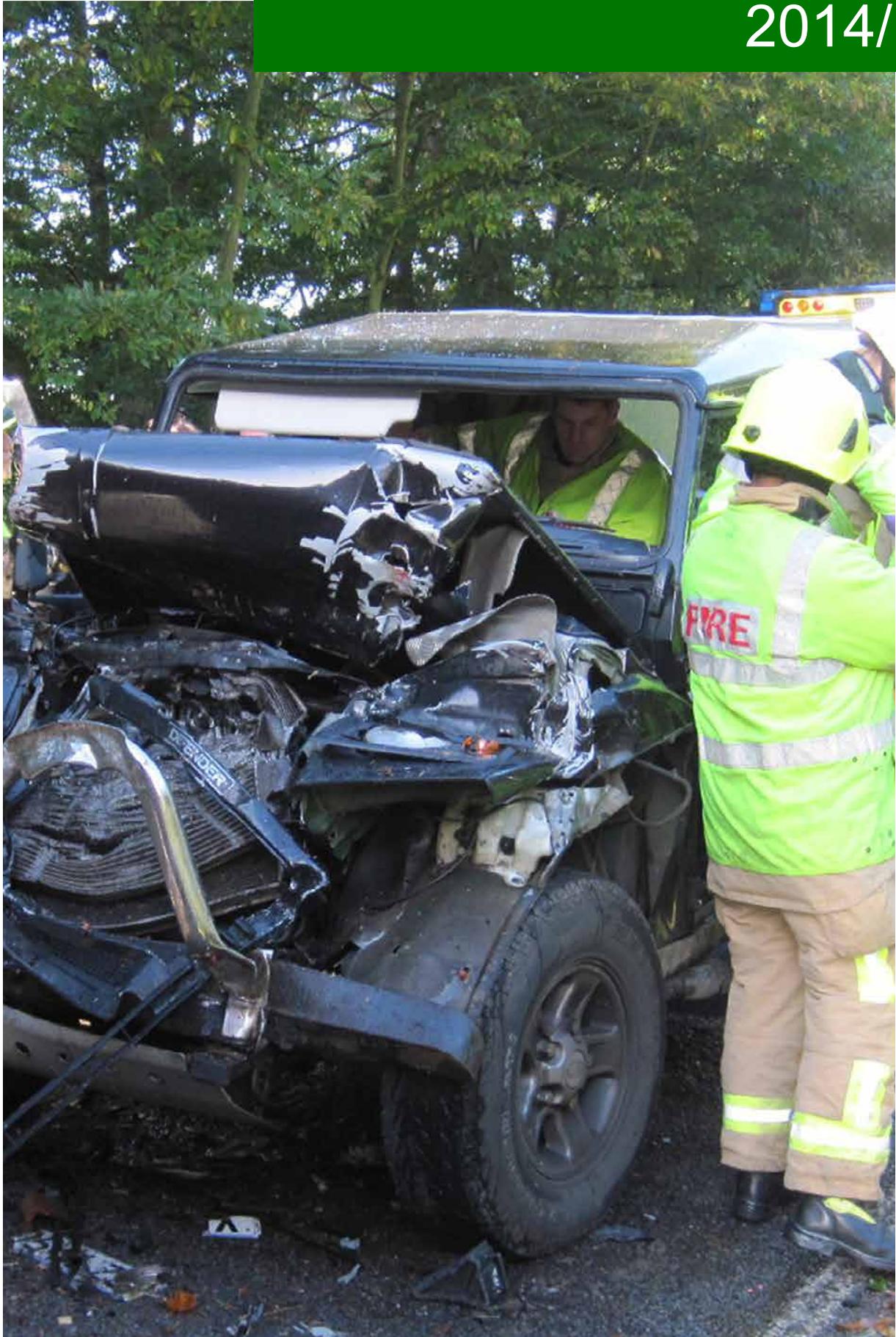
Fire crews attending a motorway vehicle fire

If there's a **fire...**

**Get Out
Stay Out
and Call
999**

Action Plan

2014/15



*Image on previous page: **Firefighter crews attending a Road Traffic Collision (RTC) incident***

Action Plan

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Action Plan

Introduction

This section outlines how we plan to deliver our vision, aims and commitments for 2014/15. It also shows how we measure our progress. Each target is listed under relevant themes and accounts for the targets which we set out in:

- The Action Plan 2013-14 / Annual Report 2012-13
- The Corporate Plan for 2011/12 - 2014/15

At the end of this year's Action Plan, the Priority Projects from this year's Corporate Strategy are listed, with a brief overview of each project. Progress will be reported in next year's Annual Report. Some of these projects fall under Integrated Risk Management Planning, because they are linked to community risk.

Turning the vision into reality

The objectives we have set ourselves in the Corporate Strategy are defined in a series of targets for 2014/15. These are closely monitored by the Corporate Management Team and the Fire Authority through its Audit and Governance Committee. Each Department has developed a Service Plan to deliver these, which do not form part of this document.

Target Summary

The table on the following pages summarises the targets we have set ourselves for 2014/15; it gives contextual information to show the direction of travel against each one. More detail on each of the targets can be found in the section following the table.

Action Plan

	Measure	2013/14 Target	2013/14 Actual	Target 2014/15	Comments
Prevention	1. Number of property/vehicle (primary) fires	1024	921	925	Target based on 3 year continued reduction trend in the number of fires decreasing each year.
	2. Number of deliberate property/vehicle (primary) fires	285	175	221	Target based on 3 year continued reduction trend in the number of deliberate fires decreasing each year.
	3. Number of deliberate other (secondary) fires	570	300	433	Target based on 3 year continued reduction trend in the number of deliberate fires decreasing each year.
	4. Number of accidental dwelling fires	360	361	350	Target based on 3 year continued reduction trend in the number of dwelling fires decreasing each year.
	5. Number of deaths from fire	0	4	0	This target has been missed 2013/14 year however as a service we strive to have zero fire deaths. We are working actively with our partners to achieve this.
	6. Number of casualties from fire	33	30	31	Target based on 3 year continued reduction trend in the number of casualties from fires decreasing each year.
	7. Number of malicious false alarms	100	94	87	Target based on 3 year continued reduction trend in the number of malicious false alarms from people decreasing each year.
	8. Percentage of dwelling fires where no smoke alarm was fitted	15%	15%	15%	The target has been set based on the 3 year trend which has been consistent. This target is linked to and influenced by the number of Home Risk Safety Checks the Service carries out.

Action Plan

	Measure	2013/14 Target	2013/14 Actual	Target 2014/15	Comments
Prevention	9. Number of Home Fire Safety Checks carried out	6000	5958	7500	The service has set a stretch target of achieving a significant increase in the number of Home Fire Safety Checks it will carry out in 2014/15. As this is one of the principal intervention methods in continuing to reduce the number of dwelling fires, injuries and deaths from fires and increase improve the number of dwellings where there is a working smoke alarm.
	10. Percentage of Home Fire Safety Checks completed in 'at risk' properties	100%	77.9%	100%	We strive to complete 100% of checks in at risk properties. This is not always achieved when properties are later deemed to have a lower risk after the check.

	Measure	2013/14 Target	2013/14 Actual	Target 2014/15	Comments
Protection	11. Number of Automatic Fire Alarms (AFA's)	1000	1012	920	A stretch target has been set to reduce down the number of automatic fire alarms. This is linked to ongoing work with fire alarm companies and the occupiers of the premises who call the fire service out.
	12. Number of fires in properties covered by the Regulations Reform Order (RRO i.e. non-domestic properties)	160	150	150	This figure was set using a different calculation for 2013/14 at 200. This was revised part way through the year to 160 to comply with a new performance measure recommended by the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA). A new target is set against this new measure and will be monitored / reviewed after 12 months.

Action Plan

	Measure	2013/14 Target	2013/14 Actual	Target 2014/15	Comments
Protection	13. Number of risk-based inspections	2500	2620	2200	A refocus on risk-based inspections has taken place and it is necessary to reinspect those very high risk premises more often which will require significant additional capacity to achieve, the target has been set accordingly.

	Measure	2013/14 Target	2013/14 Actual	Target 2014/15	Comments
Response	14. Percentage of dwelling fires attended with the first appliance within 10 minutes (verified failures)	94%	96%	94%	Target based on a three year trend.
	15. Percentage of dwelling fires attended with the first appliance within 10 minutes and the second within 12 minutes (verified failures)	85%	92%	88%	Target based on a three year trend and the target for 2014/15 has been increased based on the changes to operational cover at Newbury in West Berkshire.
	16. Percentage of Road Traffic Collisions attended within 11 minutes	90%	93%	90%	Target based on a three year trend.
	17. Percentage of dwelling fires contained to the room of origin	90%	86%	90%	Target based on a three year trend.

	Measure	2013/14 Target	2013/14 Actual	Target 2014/15	Comments
Use of Resources	18. Expenditure per head of population	£39.92	£39.27	£39.80	We have a duty to balance the budget and will therefore ensure per-head of expenditure meets our agreed budget.
	19. Total risk score (measures level of organisational risk, aiming to keep risks as low as possible)	70	88	70	Maintain target at levels set in the Corporate Plan 2011.
	20. CO ₂ emissions from Authority operations	1927 tonnes	1798 tonnes	1855 tonnes	This target was set by the Fire Authority at the inception of its Corporate Plan in 2011.

Action Plan

	Measure	2013/14 Target	2013/14 Actual	Target 2014/15	Comments
Use of Resources	21. CO ₂ emissions from building use	1193 tonnes	1114 tonnes	1133 tonnes	This target was set by the Fire Authority at the inception of its Corporate Plan in 2011.
	22. Compliments from the public	Monitor	52	Monitor	We first began monitoring this in 2013/14 and ideally wish to see an increase in compliments (on 61 in 2012/13). Because we cannot directly influence how the public wish to express their view on our Services, we therefore aim to monitor the feedback we receive.
	23. Percentage of domestic respondents satisfied with overall service	Increase on 96.5%	100%	Maintain 100%	We aim to maintain the 100% satisfaction levels of those we serve at levels seen in 2013/14.
	24. Complaints from the public	Monitor	28	Monitor	We first began monitoring this in 2012/13 and ideally wish to see a decrease in complaints (from 28 in 2012/13). Because we cannot directly influence how the public wish to express their view on our Services, we therefore aim to monitor the feedback we receive.

Action Plan

Measure	2013/14 Target	2013/14 Actual	Target 2014/15	Comments
25. Number of RIDDOR (Reporting of injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) accidents and dangerous occurrences	10	12	10	This target is the same as last year. It has been set by considering the previous 3 years data, and including the changes made to the statutory reporting criteria.
26. Number of injury accidents (including RIDDOR)	80	117	96	This target uses a baseline figure of 96 which is the average number of accidents over the preceding three complete years (201/12, 2012/13, 2013/14) and aims to improve on this figure year on year.
27. Number of working days lost to short term sickness	5.1	4.3	5.1	This target is the same as last year (to be reviewed at year end).
28. Number of ill health retirements	0	1	1	We always strive to have no ill health retirements so this target is the same as last year.
29. Percentage of eligible staff with completed Performance Development Interviews (PDI's)	100%	70%	100%	We always strive to ensure staff have up to date PDI's, so this target is the same as last year.
30. Percentage of staff from ethnic minorities	5%	5%	5%	This target was set by the Community Engagement and Equalities Group (CEEG) and will be reviewed in September 2014 for future years.
31. Percentage of staff recruited from ethnic minorities	14%	0%	14%	This target was set by the Community Engagement and Equalities Group (CEEG) and will be reviewed in September 2014 for future years.
32. Percentage of female firefighters	4%	3%	4%	This target was set by the Community Engagement and Equalities Group (CEEG) and will be reviewed in September 2014 for future years.

People

Action Plan

	Measure	2013/14 Target	2013/14 Actual	Target 2014/15	Comments
People	33. Percentage of female firefighters recruited	15%	0%	15%	This target was set by the Community Engagement and Equalities Group (CEEG) and will be reviewed in September 2014 for future years.
	34. Percentage of staff making a complaint	2.19% or lower	2.3%	2.19%	This target is to give an indication of the morale and motivation of the workforce. The target will be lower for 2014/15 and will aim to improve upon 2.19% in 2012/13.
	35. Percentage of leavers recommending RBFRS	69%	76%	76%	This target is to give an indication of how happy our employees are. The target will be set using the 2013/14 figure and will aim to improve upon 76% in 2012/13.
	36. Risk critical operational training completed for available personnel	100%	85%	100%	Target has been reviewed, however target remains the same as last year as it is essential that all available operational personnel receive risk critical training Due to circumstances outside of our control target was not achieved. A review of the current working practices has been undertaken with amendments to programme of delivery being implemented to reduce the risk of a reoccurrence.

Prevention



The aim of the Prevention department is to **reduce the risk that fire and other emergencies pose to the community.**

RBFRS are working with a health care provider in the east Berkshire area to enable firefighters, as part of their community safety activities, to advise the people they visit on a broader range of issues that they may be at risk from or need support with.

Firefighters will be made aware of the warning signs of certain matters e.g. fuel poverty, alcohol misuse, risk of crime, risk of falls etc. Firefighters will either give very simple advice on the matter or signpost the person to the relevant agency so they can obtain the support they need. A pilot will be run in the Bracknell area to assess whether this should be adopted on a wider basis.

Preventing as many emergency situations as possible means we can help minimise loss of life, injury and damage.

The following targets tell us whether we are being successful in achieving this:

Action Plan

Target for 2014/15:

No more than 925 property/vehicle (primary) fires

Primary fires are those in property or vehicles as well as some specific outdoor structures such as speed cameras and other street furniture. This target measures both accidental and deliberate fires and is an indicator of how effective our prevention measures are.

This target is 925 is lower than the target of 1024 set for 2013/14.

Target for 2014/15:

No more than 221 deliberate (primary) fires

This target measures deliberate primary fires and is an indication of the effectiveness of our work to prevent deliberate fire setting in our communities.

This target seeks an improvement on previous figures and is therefore lower than last year's target of 285.

Target for 2014/15:

No more than 433 deliberate other fires

This target measures "secondary fires" (including rubbish and grass fires that are started deliberately) and also measures the effectiveness of our antisocial behaviour initiatives.

This target seeks a lower number of deliberate other fires than the 570 target set in 2013/14.

Target for 2014/15:

No more than 360 accidental dwelling fires

This target specifically measures dwelling fires caused accidentally and measures the effectiveness of our Fire Safety education campaigns and Home Fire Safety Check scheme.

This target seeks to maintain performance on last year's target of 360. It takes into account updated incident records and demographic information that helps us focus more accurately on causal factors and the types of household most vulnerable to fire.

Action Plan

Target for 2014/15:

Zero fire deaths

This important target relates primarily to fire deaths in dwellings, which is where the majority occur, both in Berkshire and nationally. To help achieve this target we work closely with other agencies to identify people who may be vulnerable from fire or other risks in their home.

All of our Prevention, Protection and Response activities are focused on this target.

Target for 2014/15:

No more than 31 casualties in dwelling fires

This target is based on casualties requiring hospital treatment, including precautionary checks. All our Prevention, Protection and Response activities are focussed on reducing this number.

This target is lower than last year's target of 33. It is based on an expanding county population (over 863,000) and presents a challenge because just one or two significant dwelling fires will affect performance.

Target for 2014/15:

No more than 87 malicious false alarms

Malicious false alarms (or hoax calls) cost the Service and the local economy. They place the community at risk because resources are then not available for real emergencies. We therefore want to reduce the number we attend. We do this by challenging suspected malicious calls in our control room and by community education messages.

This target is lower than last year's target of 100.

Target for 2014/15:

No more than 15% of dwelling fires attended where there was no smoke alarm fitted

Smoke alarms save lives and property by giving an early signal of fire. We therefore aim to increase the number of homes with smoke alarms. Consequently we aim to reduce the percentage of dwelling fires we attend where no smoke alarm was fitted. Our smoke detector campaigns and targeted Home Fire Safety Checks help achieve this.

Action Plan

Target for 2014/15:

At least 7500 Home Fire Safety interventions

Ensuring homes are as safe as possible from fire hazards is key in preventing fire. We help by carrying out Home Fire Safety check visits and will continue to focus on vulnerable homes in the community this year.

Target for 2014/15:

100% of Home Fire Safety Checks in “at risk” premises

Home Fire Safety Checks are now focussed on “at risk” premises and vulnerable people. Our station based crews and specialist teams provide these checks. Home Fire Safety advice is also provided on our website at www.rbfrs.co.uk

This target is the same as last year.

Protection



The aim of the Protection department is to reduce risk and actively enforce fire safety in business and communal premises. Effective working over previous years has allowed even more challenging targets to be set for the coming year.

Target for 2014/15:

Maximum of 920 Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) false alarms

The introduction of a robust call filtering policy has enabled us to significantly reduce our attendance to false alarms generated by automatic fire alarm systems. Although the 2013/14 target was not met we will aim to achieve the lower target of 920 in 2014/15.

Target for 2014/15:

Maximum of 150 fires in non domestic premises

A reduction in the number of fires in non-domestic premises is a good illustration of the effectiveness of our risk based protection activity. Based upon our performance during 2013/14 we have set ourselves a target of no more than 150 fires.

This target has been set lower than the 160 set for last year. Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) recommend that Fire Safety performance measure includes buildings covered by the Regulations Reform Order (RRO). This was previously measured as buildings not dwellings and included sheds and garages- changing the measure provides a more accurate measure of the outcomes of Fire Safety activity.

Target for 2014/15:

Complete a minimum of 2200 risk based fire safety inspections in commercial properties

Our risk based inspection programme demonstrates that we are effectively discharging our legislative fire safety responsibilities by targeting those premises which are deemed to pose the greatest risk.

Based upon our performance during 2013/14 we have set ourselves a target of 2200 inspections which equates to a decrease in the number of inspections over the previous year but will guarantee 100% of high risk premises will be inspected.

Response



The aim of the Response department is to minimise loss of life, injury and damage from fire, road traffic collisions and other emergencies. The department manages the operational resources of RBFRS including all the fire stations, fire appliances and operational officers.

The speed of attendance to emergency situations is fundamental to this aim and the targets below enable monitoring of our effectiveness.

Target for 2014/15:

Maintain or improve on the 2013/14 performance of 96% for the first appliance arriving at a dwelling fire within 10 minutes

We aim to arrive at emergencies as quickly as possible; including attending dwelling fires with the first appliance arriving within 10 minutes.

For the 390 dwelling fires that we attended in 2013/14 we met this target 96% of the time and aim to match or improve on this figure in 2014/15.

Target for 2014/15:

Maintain or improve on the 2013/14 performance of 92% for the first fire engine arriving at a dwelling fire within 10 minutes and the second within 12 minutes

We mobilise at least 2 fire engines to dwelling fires, our standard response time is the first engine in 10 minutes and second in 12 minutes.

For the 390 dwelling fires that we attended in 2013/14 we met this target on 92% of the time and aim to match or improve on this figure in 2014/15.

Action Plan

Target for 2014/15:

Improvement on the 2013/14 performance of 93% when attending Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) where people are trapped, within 11 minutes

We aim to get to road traffic collisions where people are trapped as quickly as possible to reduce the time between the incident and getting someone to hospital. This period is crucial for improving the chances of survival and decreasing long term physical damage.

Our response standard is to get a fire appliance to road traffic collisions in 11 minutes.

For the 138 incidents that we attended in 2013/14 we met this target 93% of the time and aim to match or improve on this figure in 2014/15.

Target for 2014/15:

Containing dwelling fires to the room of origin on at least 90% of occasions

By striving to meet our dwelling fire attendance times and by ensuring our control operators and front line crews are trained in effective fire safety messages and fire fighting techniques, we always aim to restrict fire damage to the room where the fire started. This in turn reduces the damage and risk the fire poses to life and property.

Last year we attended 390 dwelling fires and achieved our target on 86% of occasions. We aim to improve on this performance and have set ourselves a target of 90% to be achieved in 2014/15.

Action Plan



The Water Rescue Team attending an incident

Use of Resources



Our aim is to make efficient use of public funds, maintain user satisfaction and minimise the impact of our activities on the environment. With the present highly challenging economic climate, it is especially important to ensure efficient use of our resources, finances, material and staff.

The targets below indicate that we are aiming to increase our work output at the same time as costing less per head of population. We are also aiming to reduce our CO₂ emissions.

Target for 2014/15:

Expenditure per head of population £39.80

We are already a lean organisation with low expenditure per head of population. In 2014/15 we aim to keep to this figure as low as possible.

This target has been affected by government funding cuts and our requirement to make savings to produce a legal budget.

This figure is 12 pence per head of population lower than 2013/14.

NB: This is calculated using latest population statistics provided by the Department for Communities and Local Government- will need updating with predicted population figure for 2014/15.

Target for 2014/15:

Maintain a risk management value of 70

Managing risks to the organisation as a whole helps us to stay fit for purpose, to measure this we have set a risk management value at 70 (out of a total of 225) for a four year period, including 2013/14. This target is the same as last year.

Target for 2014/15:

Reduction of CO₂ from building use to 1133 Tonnes

Where possible we will continue to do what we can to reduce the amount of CO₂ generated from our building use. We have identified that we could make our appliance bays more thermally efficient if we replace the bay doors. The Fire Authority will consider funding a programme of replacement in due course.

Action Plan

Target for 2014/15:

Reduction of CO₂ from authority operations use to 1855 Tonnes

We will continue to strive to reduce the environmental impact of our operations.

Target for 2014/15:

Monitor the amount of compliments and letters of thanks received compared to 52 in 2013/14

In 2013/14 we published 52 letters of thanks and appreciation in our internal communications bulletin. We aim to continue to monitor satisfaction levels of RBFRS service provision.

Target for 2014/15:

To maintain the percentage of people satisfied with our quality of service following a fire from 2013/14 (actual figure 100%)

We use an independent research company (ORS Ltd) to survey occupiers of properties following fires. This is for both domestic and non-domestic properties. Satisfaction figures for 2013/14 are not yet available.

We aim to maintain or increase this figure over the coming year.

Target for 2014/15:

Monitor the number of formal complaints received from the community compared to 28 in 2013/14

In 2013/14 we received and dealt with 28 complaints from the community about our activities. We aim to monitor not only the number but the causes of complaints and where appropriate take action to reduce this figure year on year.

People



We aim to have a safe, competent and motivated workforce, where there is opportunity for all.

Our staff are our most important asset, the targets we have set for the coming year will be monitored by our Health and Safety, Human Resources and Learning & Development Departments to enable us to identify and react to any trends throughout the year.

Previously RBFRS had a target of being peer assessed as 'Achieving' on the Equality Framework by March 2013. Because of the amount of resource this assessment would have required at a time when there were other priorities, it was agreed by the Community Engagement and Equality Group in December 2012 that this target would be deferred. The commitment to the Equality Framework will be reviewed three months after the move to the new headquarters in Calcot in 2014.

Target for 2014/15:

Maximum of 10 RIDDOR accidents and dangerous occurrences

To maintain a safe environment for our staff to work in, we want to ensure the number of reportable injuries/dangerous occurrences (against Reporting of Injuries, Diseases, and Dangerous Occurrences Regulation (RIDDOR)) does not rise.

This target is the same as last year. This target has been set by considering the previous three years data, including the changes made to the statutory reporting criteria.

Target for 2014/15:

Reduce the number of injury accidents (Including RIDDOR) year on year with a base line figure of 88, which is the annual average over the last three years

To align with the Fire Authority Health and Safety Objectives, this target is set as an indicator of having a safe workforce. This target uses a baseline figure of 88 which is the average number of accidents over the preceding three complete years (2011/12, 2012/13, 2013/14) and aims to improve on this figure year on year.

Reducing accidents in the coming year will continue to be a priority. This will be done in conjunction with workplace managers to identify where improvements can be made. This will be addressed through information, training and targeted campaigns to increase awareness.

As part of the South East region accident benchmarking project, it is envisaged that we will share and adopt best practices from other services which have proved successful.

Action Plan

Target for 2014/15:

Reduce the number of working days lost to short term sickness year on year, from 5.1 per employee in 2012/13

To measure the health and satisfaction of our workforce, we aim to have a minimum of working days lost to sickness. This is complemented by ensuring we have an effective Occupational Health Provider. This target is the same as last year (to be reviewed at year end).

Target for 2014/15:

0% of ill health retirements

We strive to ensure that of our staff retiring, none of these are through ill health.

This target is the same as last year.

Target for 2014/15:

Performance Development Interviews (PDI's) for 100% of eligible staff completed in last 12 months

Ensuring we stay on top of the internal management and development of staff, we strive to ensure that all of our eligible staff have had a Performance Development Interview completed within the last 12 Months. Following policy changes implemented at the end of 2012/13, a review has been scheduled for the end of March 2014. This review will ensure the process maximises benefit to individual and the organisation and will ascertain performance levels and identify what improvements to process are required to facilitate target achievement .

This target is the same as last year.

Action Plan

We constantly strive to have equal opportunities for all of our workforce and potential employees; we therefore set targets for the percentage of staff recruited from ethnic minorities, for women firefighters and women firefighter recruits. There has been very restricted recruitment into the Service during this year due to required budget savings and austerity measures.

The following **four** targets have been left in the Action plan for 2014/15 but will only be representative when recruitment restrictions are lifted.

Target for 2014/15:

5% staff in post from ethnic minorities

In order to achieve a workforce that better reflects the community, we have set ourselves this target for staff in post being from ethnic minorities.

This target is the same as last year.

Target for 2014/15:

14% of new staff recruited from ethnic minorities

In order to achieve a workforce that better reflects the community, we have set ourselves this target for recruiting new staff from ethnic minorities.

This target is the same as last year.

Target for 2014/15:

Women being 4% of existing Firefighters

As in previous years we aim to maintain this target for having a proportion of female firefighters working on our fire stations.

This target is the same as last year.

Target for 2014/15:

Women being 15% of new Firefighter recruits

Although this target remains to increase the percentage of female firefighters on our operational staff, this will be difficult to achieve due to the ongoing operational recruitment freeze. However when this recruitment freeze is lifted this will remain a target.

This target is the same as last year.

Action Plan

Target for 2014/15:

Reduce the number of staff making complaints as a proportion of the workforce from 2013/14 level of 2.30%

This target is to give an indication of the morale and motivation of the workforce; this figure is the number of employees making complaints through the Employee Complaints process during the year, as a proportion of the workforce. Have considered performance in 2013/14, the target for 2014/15 has been reduced.

As the percentage is so low this has been quoted to 2 decimal points to give a more accurate indicator.

Target for 2014/15:

Increase the percentage of leavers that would recommend RBFRS as an employer, year on year from the 2013/14 figure of 76%

This target is to give an indication of how happy our employees are, and is a measure against the Strategic Commitment to be an employer of choice; using figure from 2013/14 as a baseline we aim to increase this percentage figure year on year.

This target was added for the first time in 2013/14.

Target for 2014/15:

To complete 100% of risk critical operational training for those personnel available for training

This target will ensure our workforce is safe and competent in key skills when responding to fires and other emergency incidents.

Action Plan



Priority Projects for 2014/15

The Corporate strategy for 2014-2015 sets out fifteen Priority Projects for the coming year. This includes the continuation of several projects from 2013/14, which should complete during 2014/15 including the relocation to a new headquarters in Pincents Lane, the Thames Valley Fire Control Service Project, options following the vacation of the Dee Road Fire Station, Windsor Fire Station project and the review of emergency cover in the east of the county. Several new projects will be taken on this year under the IRMP banner and some to help develop the internal management of the Service.

Goal	Details	Director responsible	Theme
1. Deliver Fire Control arrangements for the Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS)	This ongoing project, with Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service and, more recently, Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service will provide a joint control and mobilising function for all three Thames Valley counties. It will be housed in our new HQ building in Calcot. We anticipate this to be complete in the last quarter of 2014. For more information go to: www.rbfrs.co.uk	Chief Fire Officer	
2. Relocate to a new Brigade Headquarters building	We have purchased and refurbished an office building near Junction 12 of the M4 which will be home to the Service and the new Thames Valley Fire Control, for the next thirty years or more. We anticipate the relocation to occur in the first quarter of 2014/15.	Director of Resources	
3. Decide on future arrangements following the vacation of the existing Dee Road Fire Station	The current station in Dee Road, Reading located next to the old Headquarters building is no longer fit for purpose. We therefore need to identify the options available to the Service in the vacating of that station and determine the best course of action.	Director of Resources	
4. Build and occupy a new Fire Station in Tinkers Lane, Windsor	A joint approach with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead has been agreed to establish a new fire station in the Windsor area. This new satellite station will be located in Tinkers Lane.	Director of Resources	

Action Plan

Goal	Details	Director responsible	Theme
5. Ensure sustainable arrangements are in place for establishing, maintaining and using effective IT infrastructure	Information technology is vital to our everyday business, including as mobilising to incidents and enabling the Fire and Rescue Service to Plan for its future commitments. We therefore need to ensure we have robust IT systems and operations in place.	Director of Resources	
6. Complete a review of the fire cover in the east of the County	A review of emergency response in the east of the county area was undertaken during 2013/14. Recommendations from the review will be considered and appropriate action taken throughout 2014/15. The review will continue to follow the Authority's IRMP process.	Director of Service Delivery, through the IRMP process	  
7. Introduce Comprehensive and robust performance management arrangements	Good performance management helps authorities run and improve services. This project aims to build on good practice within the Service to make better use of performance information for decision making.	Director of Strategy and Risk Management	
8. Implement a shared procurement service with Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service	Following discussions between RBFRS and Buckinghamshire FRS it was agreed that a shared procurement service could commence from January 2014. RBFRS will roll out a full procurement service to both FRS's including tendering, quotations and supplier management to create commercial opportunities and leverage along with standardisation of products and services through collaborative working.	Director of Resources	
9. Conduct a staff engagement programme about the future direction of the RBFRS	2014 will be a year in which the Service prepares for the future by looking at the direction of the Service for the next few years. A programme of work for 2015 and beyond will be worked upon, shaped by our staff as well as colleagues from partner organisations and people from the communities we serve.	Chief Fire Officer	
10. Complete and introduce a Property Asset Management Plan	RBFRS has a number of properties located across the county; this project aims to look at managing the organisation's assets for the future against our agreed standards of service.	Director of Resources	 

Action Plan

Goal	Details	Director responsible	Theme
11. Review and determine response standards	To review the current RBFRS response standards to incidents to ensure they are fit still for purpose. The review will include benchmarking against other Fire and Rescue Services' standards, the wider inclusion of Community Safety measures and the local needs of Royal Berkshire communities. The review will also consider if the standards which only currently cover fires in Dwellings and Road Traffic Collisions where people are trapped should be widened to include other types of incidents. This project will be completed under the banner of IRMP.	Director of Service Delivery, through the IRMP process	  
12. Review crewing levels for frontline fire appliances	To review the crewing levels on front line fire appliances. Currently front line appliances can have between 4 and 6 Fire fighters on them. This review will determine the minimum number of firefighters that should be provided on each appliance, which will feed into how many fire fighters are required to provide the front line service establishment. This project will be completed under the banner of IRMP.	Director of Service Delivery, through the IRMP process	  
13. Review the Role of Retained Firefighters in Berkshire	Following the retained review in 2010, it is necessary to undertake an evaluation of progress against the determined project outcomes and consider matters affecting that have arisen since implementation.	Director of Service Delivery, through the IRMP process	  
14. Review Corporate Risk Management	The existing management processes to assess corporate risk are very dated and need a comprehensive review. The intention is to assess ways to embed the risk management processes within other project and performance management systems	Director of Strategy and Risk Management	
15. Implement the outcomes of the IRMP Learning and Development Review	A review of Learning and Development was undertaken under the auspices of IRMP in 2011. The outcomes need to be implemented.	Director of Corporate Services	

NOTE: Refer to the Appendices for a key explaining the use of the theme symbols

Glossary

Symbols



Scale of Demand

This refers to the number of calls we receive and the number and type of incidents we attend.



Economic and Social Benefit of our Service

The benefit to the community by: reducing the number of incidents that occur (Prevention); Reducing the risk to people (Protection) and dealing with incidents efficiently (Response).



Performance and Progress

Setting targets and monitoring the performance against them ensures we work towards achieving our strategic commitments.



Prevention

(Formerly known as community safety) – covers all the teams that work to reduce risk in the community.



Protection

The department responsible for ensuring that commercial organisations comply with statutory requirements and do not place staff, customers or community at risk.



Response

Our Operational department, fire crews, officers and appliances required to resolve emergency incidents.



Use of Resources

The use of financial and physical assets, taking into account the impact to the environment.



People

Our staff and volunteers, our most valuable asset. Our human resource.

Animal Rescue

Assistance with large animals that are trapped or injured and pose a potential risk to humans or property carried out by specially trained firefighters and officers with specialist equipment. Occasionally, the RSPCA will request assistance with a small animal that is trapped in an inaccessible or dangerous location.

Appliance

A vehicle used for a specific operational function e.g. pumping appliance, aerial ladder appliance. Generically referred to as 'fire engines'.

Breathing Apparatus or 'BA'

Self-contained breathing apparatus. Delivers air under pressure and allows firefighters to work in conditions that would otherwise be intolerable (excessive heat, lack of oxygen, toxic gases etc). Consists of a face mask and a pressurised cylinder, in a webbing harness and is worn on a firefighter's back.

Community engagement

Working with individuals, community groups, volunteers, local authorities and agencies to ensure that we are serving every sector of the community effectively.

Emergency Escape Plan

Every home should have one. A plan agreed by residents in a property to be used in the event of fire. Includes escape routes, locations of window keys, shutting doors at night, staying low to the floor and other key actions. Make yours by following this link: www.rbfrs.co.uk/microsite-cs/hfsc-public.asp

Hoax calls

Calls that do not relate to a real emergency. These are classified as (i) 'good intent' i.e. made because the caller genuinely believed that a fire or other emergency was in progress or (ii) 'malicious', where the caller makes a deliberate attempt to mislead the service into sending a fire engine and crew to a non-existent incident. The service now works with the police to prosecute malicious callers where possible.

Home Fire Safety Check or HFSC

Provided free of charge to vulnerable members of the community. These include people who are elderly, disabled, are single parents or those who do not speak English. The checks are carried out by firefighters or specially trained Prevention staff and include the installation of smoke detectors where required.

Integrated Risk Management Plan or IRMP

Introduced in 2004 as a government requirement. The previous generic national response standards were abolished and all fire and rescue services required instead to base their service provision around an integrated approach to managing and responding to risk. This includes detailed analysis of risk profiles linked to communities, infrastructure, population types and location, transport characteristics and incident statistics, to ensure that services match need.

Mosaic

Mosaic Public Sector is the UK's only classification designed specifically for use by the public sector and focuses on the needs of citizens. It provides a detailed and accurate understanding of each citizen's location, their demographics, lifestyles and behaviours.

The current version of Mosaic Public Sector capitalises on Experian's access to a wealth of information on all UK individuals to help you understand their need for public services now and in the future. Using more than 440 data elements, it classifies all UK citizens into 69 types and 15 groups providing an accurate and up to date view of citizens and their needs.

Operational

Staff who carry out operational duties. All begin their careers as firefighters and can progress through the following roles as they gain experience and qualifications, Crew Manager, Watch Manager, Station Manager, Group Manager, Area Manager, Brigade Manager.

Prevention department (formerly known as community safety)

Covers all the teams that work to reduce risk in the community i.e. prevent fires and other emergencies from happening. This includes teams working on community risk, education and awareness, youth engagement, home fire safety check provision and road traffic collision reduction.

Protection

Experts in fire safety legislation. Responsible for ensuring that commercial organisations comply with statutory requirements and do not place staff, customers or community at risk.

Pump

Refers to the main pump located on a fire appliance but also used to apply to a fire engine. Can also refer to the portable pumps carried on fire engines.

Retained – or part-time firefighters

Respond to call outs from their place or home or work. Train and work alongside full-time firefighters.

Road Traffic Collision or RTC

Firefighters now spend more time rescuing people – and save more lives - following RTCs than they do from fires. They use sophisticated hydraulic cutting and spreading equipment, with a variety of smaller tools, to 'extricate' (remove) people who are trapped in vehicles so that they can be removed to hospital as quickly as possible.

Smoke detector

Often called smoke alarms. Inexpensive device that detects smoke and heat and alerts residents with a very loud, high-pitched, beeping sound. Every house should have a smoke detector on every floor. Proven life savers as they give residents a chance to get out of a house before a fire takes hold. Find out more by following this link: www.rbfrs.co.uk/microsite-cs/hfsc-public.asp

Special appliances

Appliances that are used for specific functions e.g. aerial ladder (high reach) platform, high-volume pumping unit.

Support staff

Staff who work in non-operational roles e.g. finance, information technology, human resources, procurement, hydrants, transport.

Watch

A team of firefighters based at a wholetime (24-hour) fire station. Watches (traditionally Red, Green, Blue and White) consist of firefighters and two junior officers, who attend incidents in a fire appliance. Retained fire station firefighters are not organised into Watches.

Water Rescue

Specially trained firefighters who rescue people from waterways or who are trapped in water or mud. The water rescue boat can also be used for water-based firefighting e.g. boats or island fires.

Wholetime

Fulltime firefighters, working from a fire station.

Working at Height

Firefighters receive training in advanced techniques and the use of specialist equipment to enable them to carry out their duties at height (e.g. cranes, rooftops, steep inclines).

Background Information

The location of the 18 fire stations in Berkshire is shown below; these are more closely spaced around the areas of highest population.

For more detailed information on the location of these stations please follow this link: www.rbfrs.co.uk/fire_stations.asp



Do you want to become a Retained Duty System Firefighter ?

There is currently a shortage of part time firefighters at some fire stations in the Brigade. This is particularly true in our small towns and rural areas because nowadays there are fewer people who live and work in their local towns and villages. You might be just the person to fill the gap.

What do you get out of it?

Apart from the excitement, the challenge and the satisfaction of a job well done, you learn to become self-reliant and confident. After all, if you can cope in a real emergency, you are ready for anything else which life might throw at you. You will meet a lot of people in your local community and earn their confidence and respect. You will also get training in the use of equipment, and in other more general skills like first aid. Added to all this, you get paid! You get paid a basic retainer, plus a fee for call outs and another fee for going into action. You get paid for training and duties like equipment maintenance.

Where do you work?

First of all, you need to live or work near to a fire station because you have to be able to get there within a few minutes of a call. That's a few hundred yards on foot or a drive of up to one mile. Secondly, because we can't predict when you'll be called out, you have to be flexible in your work. The chances are that you'll be working at home, self-employed or for a community-minded employer who can let you off from time to time.

Are you fit for the job?

To apply to join Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service you don't need any paper qualifications. You must be at least 18, with good all-round fitness. You will be asked to take a straightforward physical test as part of the process, and just as important are qualities like common sense, commitment and enthusiasm.

How often will you be needed?

On average, you will be called out two or three times a week for a couple of hours. If you cannot be available all the time, that's not a problem. You can be paid for being "on call" for only part of the day or week. There is a particular shortage of people who are available during midweek working hours, so you could have evenings or weekends free if you need to, and still do a valuable and worthwhile job. If you really can't be on call - for example because of a holiday or a deadline at work - you can "sign off". You will also be required to attend training once a week for three hours on a Monday evening.

Further information

If you think you've got what it takes to join the team, contact your local fire station for further information, or check out our vacancies at: www.rbfrs.co.uk/vacancies.asp

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

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