

# ANNUAL REPORT 2014-15



**ROYAL BERKSHIRE  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

*MAKING BERKSHIRE SAFER*



# Contents

## **3 FOREWORD**

- 4 Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) : How we look

## **5 PURPOSE AND AIMS**

- 5 Our purpose
- 5 Prevention, Protection, Response
- 6 Use of Resources, People, Priority Projects

## **7 PREVENTION**

- 7 Key Headlines
- 7 Developments in 2014/15
- 8 Case Studies

## **9 PROTECTION**

- 9 Key Headlines
- 9 Developments in 2014/15
- 10 Case Studies

## **11 RESPONSE**

- 11 Key Headlines
- 11 Developments in 2014/15
- 12 Case Studies
- 13 Integrated Risk Management Plan

## **14 USE OF RESOURCES**

- 14 Key Headlines
- 14 Developments in 2014/15
- 15 Case Studies

## **16 PEOPLE**

- 16 Key Headlines
- 16 Developments in 2014/15
- 17 Case Studies

## **18 ASSURANCE AND PERFORMANCE**

- 18 Annual Assurance Statement
- 18 Peer Challenge
- 19 Vision, Mission and Purpose

## **20 RBFRS KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND TARGETS**

## **22 CONTACT US**

# Foreword

## Welcome to the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Annual Report for 2014/15.



**Andy Fry**  
Chief Fire Officer  
and Chief Executive

We are very pleased to be jointly introducing this important document, which summarises key information about Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service's (RBFRS's) activities over the last 12-months. The Report is intended to help enable people who are interested in the Service to access information about what it does, why, and how well it is performing.

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**Cllr Colin Dudley**  
Chair of the Fire  
Authority

2014/15 was another busy year. It started with the Service 'drawing-breath' after having dealt with the devastating wide-area flooding that struck the Thames Valley in early 2014, and finished with us finalising preparations to open the Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) – a 999 call-handling centre that will serve the people of Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Royal Berkshire. This collaborative venture is certainly an important sign of things to come, and the years ahead will see many more examples of resources being shared to reduce costs and maintain quality, in the face of increasing downward financial pressure.

During the course of the year, we opened a new Service Headquarters building in Calcot, which will be home to the TVFCS, as well as providing a modern setting from which Headquarters staff will be able to do an even better job of supporting service delivery arrangements. We also opened a new fire station in Windsor. This was another important example of collaboration, with the Royal Borough Council meeting the costs of constructing the building and RBFRS providing the staff and equipment necessary for it to provide 24-7 emergency response cover to surrounding communities.

Unfortunately the long-running dispute between Central Government and the Fire Brigades Union over pension reforms continued through the whole of the year, with associated strike action generating significant financial expense and regular disruption. On the plus side, however, despite the fact that such disputes always cause a degree of tension in the relationships between staff who are striking and those who are not, we have been very proud of the professional behaviour that has characterised the conduct of the vast majority of our RBFRS colleagues.

Significantly, June 2014 saw Fire Authority Members publish a revised policy agenda: Our Commitments to the People of Royal Berkshire. Publication of this document was the culmination of a root-and-branch review which has re-set the direction of RBFRS, and will guide its work during the years ahead. Since then, examples have started to emerge of the Authority's commitments coming to life – whether in the shape of our newly-issued defibrillators providing life saving medical assistance, or firefighters using their role-model status to raise aspiration and attainment in young people. The role of the Service is already beginning to broaden and will continue to do so as we move forward.

We hope that you find the content of this Annual Report 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.

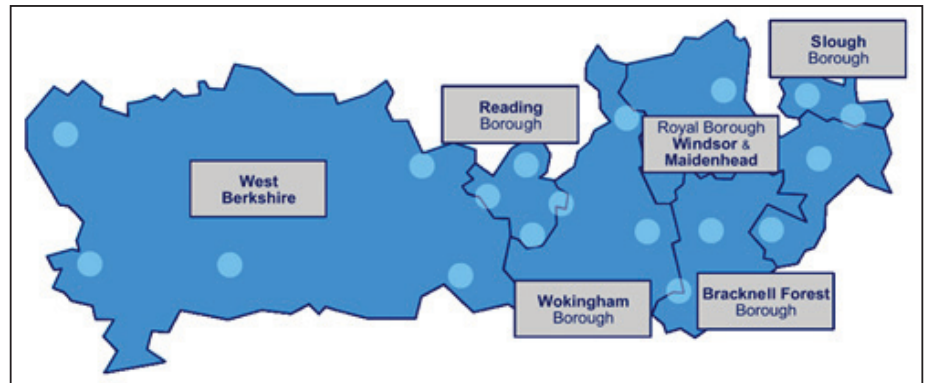
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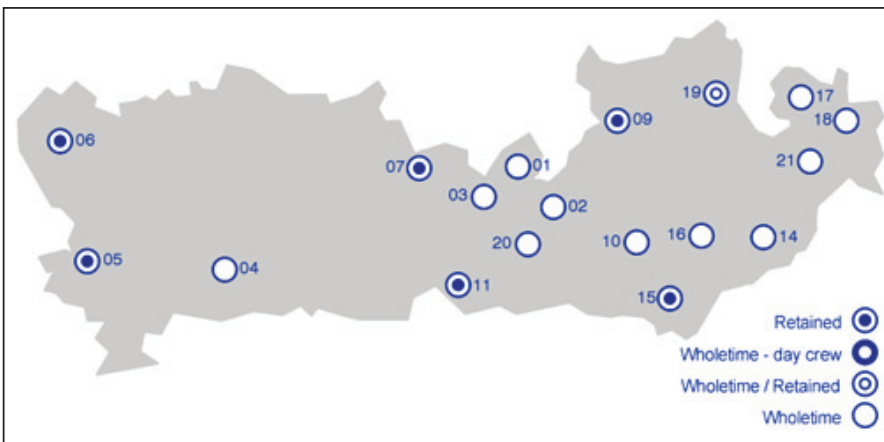
# Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service: How we look

Berkshire has six unitary authorities. It includes many major roads, including the M4 and the A34.

During 2014-15, RBFRS received 9,996 calls from members of the public requesting assistance, ranging from animal rescues to major industrial fires.



Berkshire has a diverse population of 863,000 people. The majority, around 710,000, live in the east of the county.



RBFRS has 12 full-time fire stations and six retained (on-call) fire stations.

Berkshire is home to many famous residents. Perhaps the most well-known is HM The Queen at Windsor Castle.

Berkshire covers 722 square miles, with both rural and urban areas. The west of the county is mainly rural. It is home to many large farms and the racing stables in the Lambourn area. The majority of Berkshire's industry is located in the eastern half of the county, with Slough home to one of the largest industrial estates in Europe.

Many international companies choose to house their head quarters in Berkshire due to its excellent links with London and the rest of the country.



# Purpose and Aims

**Our Purpose:** To protect and improve the quality of life for the people in Berkshire and those who travel through Berkshire whether on business or pleasure.

## Prevention

**Outcome: Keep Berkshire safe from fires, traffic collisions or other hazards.**

The Fire Authority made a commitment to 'Minimise the loss of life, injury and damage from fire, road traffic collisions and other hazards'.

We achieved this by working in the community, giving advice and support. We visited schools, homes, workplaces and local communities to raise awareness about how to prevent fires and other emergencies and what to do if they happen.

We also work hard to alter people's behaviour, to reduce accidental fires, deliberate fires and the number of emergencies on the roads and waterways.

We measured our success by the reduction in the number of, and damage caused by, fires across Berkshire.

workplace. Our aim is to reduce risk and actively enforce fire safety in business and communal premises. Safer businesses mean better workplaces for the people of Berkshire.

We measured our success by the reduction in the number of fires at properties covered by the relevant legislation and by the reduction in the number of false alarms at commercial properties.

## Response

**Outcome: To provide an effective response to fires, traffic collisions and other emergencies.**

The Fire Authority made a commitment to 'Provide resilient emergency response through risk management and planning'. In working towards this we ensured we are there when the people of Berkshire need us.

We aim to minimise loss of life, injury and damage from fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies. Our firefighters are highly trained and we ensure that we are there when we are needed, whether for a small kitchen fire or a major explosion, railway accident or flooding.

We measured our success by (i) increasing the number of incidents at which we arrived within a set time (10 minutes for the first fire engine and 12 minutes for the second)

(ii) the percentage of road traffic collisions attended within 11 minutes and the percentage of house fires where the fire was contained in the room of origin.

## Protection

**Outcome: The risk and vulnerability to fire in business and communal premises are managed.**

The Fire Authority made a commitment to 'Improve public and business safety and reduce risk, through targeted education and enforcement of fire safety legislation'.

We achieved this by providing advice and support to businesses, workers and employers, to help prevent fires and keep people safe in the

## Use of Resources

### Outcome: Efficient use of resources

The Fire Authority made a commitment to **'Demonstrate continuous improvement and efficiencies ensuring consultation and partnership working and to also conduct activities in an environmental sustainable way'**.

We have worked to keep our costs down to improve efficiency. We have shared staff and resources with other organisations where possible and aim to reduce the environmental impact of our activity.

We measured our success by:

- (i) Minimising the costs of our services per head of population
- (ii) Managing organisational risk
- (iii) Reducing the number of complaints we received
- (iv) Reducing carbon dioxide emissions and using feedback from members of the public.

## People

### Outcome: Have a safe competent and motivated workforce where there is opportunity for all.

The Fire Authority made a commitment to **'Be an employer of choice, offering equality of opportunity and development to all'**.

From the firefighters and community safety staff who see people every day, to our support and development staff who work behind the scenes it is our aim to employ and train people with the right skills and attitude to deliver high quality service.

We measured our success by:

- (i) Maintaining high levels of staff appraisals

- (ii) Reducing the number of working days lost to sickness and
- (iii) Increasing the number of leavers who recommend RBFRS as an employer of choice. We continue to aim at increasing the percentage of staff from a variety of backgrounds.

## Priority Projects for 2014/15

1. Deliver fire control arrangements for the Thames Valley.
2. Relocate to a new service HQ
3. Determine future arrangements for Dee Road fire station
4. Relocate to new fire station in Tinkers Lane Windsor
5. Ensure suitable arrangements are in place for establishing, maintaining and using effective IT infrastructure
6. Complete a review of the fire cover in the east of the county
7. Introduce comprehensive and robust performance management arrangements
8. Develop shared procurement services 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
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 Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) learning and development review.

# Prevention

## Key Headlines

### Fire victims

Our aim is zero fire deaths. Sadly there were three deaths in accidental dwelling fires during 2014-15. RBFRS investigates every dwelling fire resulting in a fatality.

The number of people seriously injured in accidental house fires in 2014-15 was 26, against the target we set of no more than 31.

### Primary fires

There were 379 primary fires this year, more than we predicted, so we have reviewed our home fire safety check process to ensure we concentrating on the households most at risk.

### Deliberate primary fires

There were 146 this year, 71 fewer than last year and below the predicted maximum of 221.

### Secondary deliberate fires

There were 246 during 2014-15, against a predicted maximum 446. This is also an improvement on the previous year when there were 300.

### Primary dwelling fires accidental

There were 376 this year, a slight increase on 2013-14 (361) and above the target 350 so we will focus more prevention activity in this area.

### Home Fire Safety Checks completed

We set a target of 7,500 this year but actually carried out 8,550, significantly more than the 6036 completed in the previous year.

**Primary fires** are generally more serious fires occurring in, for example, buildings, caravans or trailers, vehicles, outdoor storage and plant, machinery. Fire involving casualties or rescues, or attended by five or more appliances, would also be categorised as a primary fire.

**Secondary fires** are generally small fires which start in, and are confined to, outdoor locations.

## Developments over the past year

### Reduction in fire deaths

We aim for zero fire deaths. Sadly, there were three deaths as a result of fire last year. We investigate every fire death to identify any factors which could potentially save life in the future. These investigations include a review of any previous fire and rescue service-related activity at the premises. A detailed report is compiled, looking at partnership arrangements, information sharing between agencies, prevention strategies and future actions to protect the most vulnerable members of our community. This report is passed to the coroner and used by ourselves for future planning.

### Home Fire Safety Checks

We identify households at a higher risk of fire (primarily more vulnerable members of the community) and focus on these premises.

### Safeguarding

Our prevention staff work closely with safeguarding adult partnership boards across Berkshire to improve awareness of our services. We also want to highlight the benefits of technology such as portable



sprinkler systems, which reduce the risk of fire-related injuries and may help a vulnerable person to stay in their own home.

## Firebreak

This is a scheme for young people (see case study on p8). We ran two courses this year.

## Firefit

The result of a partnership with Berkshire's public health teams, Firefit offers a chance for families and young people to improve activity levels and reduce obesity.

## Firebreak Case Study

In July 2014, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service partnered with Berkshire public health teams to run a 'Firebreak' pilot. This course offered the opportunity for nine young people from the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Bracknell Forest and Slough Unitary Authorities to take part in a four-day course which combined practical drill ground and scenario-based training, along with classroom based discussions and workshops covering drugs awareness and internet safety. The partnership work with the Public Health teams also allowed the young people to complete an Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network Qualification using evidence collected throughout the course. Due to its success, a further course was run in March 2015.



Firebreak instructor demonstrating fire service equipment.

### Firebreak instructor demonstrating fire service equipment.

The FireBreak course has been developed by experienced members of the Prevention department and operational firefighters and who together on this occasion formed the Firebreak delivery team. The latest Firebreak programme incorporated a wide variety of activities, such as hose drills, wearing breathing apparatus, moral reasoning and fire safety intended to develop a number of key attributes, including:

- ◆ Self-motivation, discipline and confidence
- ◆ Self-respect and respect for others
- ◆ Communication skills - listening and understanding
- ◆ Working with others
- ◆ Personal and social responsibility
- ◆ Punctuality and adherence to a structured day

At the end of each day, participants had an opportunity to reflect on their experiences with the support of a mentor. A Passing out Parade was held to celebrate the achievements of each young person, which parents, carers, teachers and friends were invited to attend. It is anticipated that the evaluation of the pilot courses will shape an evolving Firebreak initiative.



Prevention staff demonstrating personal protection equipment

### Prevention staff demonstrating personal protection equipment

#### Dementia Action Alliance (DAA)

RBFRS is proud to be a DAA member and to provide support to the dementia-friendly community. It is important to ensure these households receive potentially lifesaving home fire safety checks. At the launch of its Newbury group, a DAA spokesman said: "The smiling faces of our guests with dementia, and their carers, are testament to how important it is that RBFRS is part of the alliance."



# Protection

## Key Headlines

### **Number of Commercial Automatic Fire Alarms (AFA) –**

RBFrs responded to 1,015 unwanted fire signals in 2014-15. This is more than the predicted maximum of 920. This performance is similar to that of the previous year where we attended 1012.



Sprinkler in action controlling fire spread

### **Number of Primary Fires at property under Regulations Reform Order**

The number of these fires (164) was greater than the expected maximum of 150 but similar to the previous year (163). We have reviewed our fire safety risk-based inspection program to ensure we are concentrating on auditing the highest risk premises.

### **Number of risk based inspection by Fire Safety Officers**

We aimed to do 2,200 audits this year but actually carried out 2,556, concentrating on the more complex premises.

(Figures for all end of year targets can be found on pages20-22).

## Developments over the past year

### **Fire safety audits**

The benefits of sprinkler systems have been promoted to further minimize the risk to life from fire, fire safety inspecting officers have conducted over 2000 fire safety audits in buildings that fall under the regulatory reform order.

### **Sprinkler systems**

The benefits of sprinkler systems has also been promoted through presentations to planning committees and planning departments. In particular the benefit for minimising the social economic and environmental impact of fires in schools, care homes, dwellings and commercial premises has been highlighted.

### **Primary Authority Schemes**

The primary authority scheme was introduced to provide a single point of contact for fire safety advice for companies, locally and nationally. RBFrs is the recommended partner for the Radion Group Ltd and the University Partnership Program Ltd. This aims to ensure consistent fire safety advice is provided to businesses needing to comply with the regulatory reform order and thereby supporting responsible economic growth.

### **Enforcement**

Enforcement of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 resulted in five successful prosecutions this year. All five resulted in guilty pleas. Prosecution is always a last resort and we will take action only in the most serious cases of infringement.

The year has seen one such case robustly challenged through the Courts alleging an abuse of process in the bringing of a prosecution. The resultant outcome found the judiciary dismissing the challenge with the Authority unambiguously vindicated in the laying of the Prosecution. The relevant case resulted in a guilty verdict.

## Career Grade scheme case study

To help ensure that RBFRS continues to provide high quality support to businesses and their employees and customers, we have developed our own career grade development scheme. We recruit high-calibre people and train them to become fully qualified fire safety inspecting officers.

Previous attempts to recruit already-qualified fire safety inspecting officers were unsuccessful. The high cost of living in Berkshire, and the fact that salaries for comparable roles in the private sector are higher, meant that we had to consider alternatives for recruiting and maintaining these staff.

We also wanted to balance the number of uniformed and non-uniformed officers to improve efficiency, flexibility and value for money. Our career grade scheme ensures that we can 'future proof' these services and fulfill our legal obligation to enforce the Regulatory Reform Order.

The career grade scheme was designed and developed so that the organisation could "future-proof" its services and fulfil its legal obligation to enforce the Fire Safety Order. Successful applicants are now sought on the basis that they are developed in the Fire Safety Inspecting Officers role and receive incremental pay awards as they met the necessary standards of the role.

## Domestic Sprinkler systems

During this year's national sprinkler week, in March, RBFRS highlighted the benefits of sprinkler systems for domestic properties. These can be a good option for people who may struggle to leave their homes quickly in a fire, for example, the elderly or people with limited mobility.

The value of sprinklers was emphasised in an incident that took place in St Laurence Way, Slough. Four fire crews were called to a flat fire, during which a man had to be led to safety by firefighters. Fortunately, the flat was fitted with sprinklers, which activated and started to suppress the fire before the crews arrived, preventing it from spreading. Group Manager Chris Bunyan said: "There are many myths about sprinklers, for example, that they will go off every time someone burns the toast, or that they are hugely expensive, but this is simply not the case." "There are a number of different types of domestic sprinkler systems available, such as portable misting systems. These can be particularly beneficial for vulnerable people, as if a fire should start in the home, it can be extinguished quickly, reducing both danger to the occupant and damage to the property."

Chris Bunyan also advised, "We would urge both business owners and householders alike to consider fitting sprinkler systems in their premises wherever possible."



An example of a domestic sprinkler activating to demonstrate the amount of spray produced

# Response

## Key Headlines

### Attendance at incidents

#### Dwelling fires

We set a target that the first fire engine will arrive at a dwelling fire within 10 minutes, ninety-four percent of the time. We achieved this in ninety-three percent of cases. The target for the second fire engine to arrive was 12 minutes, in 88 percent of cases, and this was what we achieved. This year, we aimed to contain dwelling fires within the room of origin in ninety percent of cases and achieved eight-five percent.

#### Road traffic collisions

Our target for attendance at road traffic collisions was 11 minutes in 90 percent of cases. This was also achieved.

#### Confining fires

We aimed to confine 90% of fires to the room of origin in 2014/15 and we managed this 85% of the time.

#### Satisfaction rates

Our external survey showed that one hundred percent of respondents were happy with the service we provided at fires we attend.

#### Priority projects

- ◆ We reviewed the fire cover in the east of the County and made some changes to our Services in Bracknell and Ascot.
- ◆ We begun a review of our response standards to determine what they should be in future.
- ◆ We have begun a review of crewing levels on our front line appliances
- ◆ We have begun a review the role of retained firefighters

## Developments over the past year

### High Rise Training

After two tragic incidents involving firefighters in Hertfordshire and Hampshire, we carried out a thorough review of the procedures and tactics used at fires in high-rise buildings. This led to new regional operational guidance and comprehensive training on the new procedures.

The new guidance is based on risk assessments and a staged approach to tackling high-rise fires, designed to offer firefighters better protection when dealing with such incidents.

### Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Program

In our ever changing world RBFRS have to adapt to the demands placed upon them and this means they are working together with Thames Valley Police and South Central Ambulance Service at major incidents and emergencies on an ever increasing basis. We need to ensure that our initial response to these incidents is more organised, structured and practiced. To assist this, RBFRS has trained all operational and control staff in the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Program.

This has given us the ability to establish joint interoperability principles and ways of working.



Multiagency working at incidents



## Exercise Luella

The purpose of this exercise was to test the effectiveness of several emergency services working together. A helicopter team from the Royal Navy's Air Sea Rescue participated, as they do offer inland support for difficult rescues.

All emergency services taking part used the JESIP protocol (see previous page). Using a risk-based approach, sharing information and working closely together makes it easier to resolve the problems at emergency incidents.

There is a specific hierarchy for water rescue, talk, reach, throw, go and HELO. The HELO is helicopter support and this is very rarely considered and so would be a new concept to RBFRS as an inland fire service.

The exercise provided an opportunity for those individuals trained in water rescue management to actually work alongside the Royal Air Force, Thames Valley Police and the Environmental Agency.

It was identified following the exercise that communications between all agencies were excellent. The JESIP approach, although in its early stages, worked well and all agencies were aware of the individual priorities and objective.

RBFRS has the facility to relay live pictures from the National Police Air Service helicopter of the incident ground via any command vehicles on scene, this made the initial assessment of the scene much quicker in identifying the location of those requiring rescue.

Once the locations were known a request was made for the air sea rescue unit. Thames Valley Police commented on the shared use of the airwave radio system and applauded our eagerness to utilise this relatively under used resource. This assisted greatly with the JESIP approach and ensured that commanders were in communication at all times. The use of the helicopter video camera and the live feed to our command unit provided excellent support for all commanders and also ensured that there was less need for commanders to want to remove themselves from their command position to view the incident ground.

RBFRS is always keen to improve its working with all agencies and through exercises like this we have identified many areas of good practice. It also gives us the opportunity to identify learning points such as policies, equipment and internal operating procedures.





## Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP)

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 had produced a Five Year Integrated Risk Management Plan. The plan identified the measures that Royal Berkshire Fire Authority proposed 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 took into account the commercial, economic, environmental and heritage concerns of the six Unitary Authority areas in Berkshire. The aim of the Integrated Risk Management Plan was to deliver the Right Resources at the Right Time, in the Right Place and within our available budget.



Extrication demonstration at a community event

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

Last year saw the end of our 5 year integrated risk management plan and work is being undertaken to develop the next five year plan.

## Changes to Bracknell and Ascot Fire Stations

The 2013/14 RBFA Action Plan included a project to review the fire cover in the East of the County. A project team, comprising of representatives from across the service, including the Fire Brigades Union (FBU), researched a number of possible solutions.

The project research showed that Wokingham crews were responding more quickly and frequently to incidents in the Bracknell area and that the Retained Duty System (RDS) staff at Bracknell were being used less. This was primarily due to the change in the duty system at Wokingham from Day Crewing to Wholetime in 2011 but also caused by RDS staffing problems in Bracknell which meant the RDS appliance was unavailable for 87% of the time in 2013. Following the research, a recommendation was made to the Fire Authority (FA) that Bracknell RDS should be disbanded.

Sitting alongside this, it was also found that the RDS appliance at Ascot was only available when supported by the Retained Support Unit (RSU), as there were insufficient RDS Crew available (despite a number of recruitment programs). It was agreed that to crew an appliance at Ascot by moving the multi role vehicle (and some staff) and using Bracknell as a base for the appliance, thereby making Ascot a satellite. This means there will be an additional Wholetime Duty System (WDS) appliance in Berkshire, increasing resilience.

The proposal to disband the RDS section at Bracknell went to full public and staff consultation on 30th June 2014. We appointed an independent company to facilitate two public engagement forums (one with Bracknell residents and the other with stakeholders from the voluntary and business sectors). A staff 'Challenge Day' was also held. Included in the final consultation report, was the following statement:

"The overwhelming view of the forums was that RBFRS should implement the proposal"

# Use of Resources

## Key Headlines

### **Budget**

Our budget for 2014-15 was £33.383 million. We forecast a slight underspend by the end of the year (end of year accounts will be available in June 2015).

### **Carbon Footprint (carbon dioxide) from Buildings and FRS operations**

The full data for these performance measures will not be available until the final utility information is provided by the suppliers in July. Although data for April is in line with this time last year providing a level of confidence that we will be on target.

## Developments over the past year

### **High Rise Training**

After two tragic incidents involving firefighters in Hertfordshire and Hampshire, we carried out a thorough review of the procedures and tactics used at fires in high-rise buildings. This led to new regional operational guidance and comprehensive training on the new procedures.

The new guidance is based on risk assessments and a staged approach to tackling high-rise fires, designed to offer firefighters better protection when dealing with such incidents.

### **Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Program**

In our ever changing world RBFRS have to adapt to the demands placed upon them and this means they are working together with Thames Valley Police and South Central Ambulance Service at major incidents and emergencies on an ever increasing basis. We need to ensure that our initial response to these incidents is more organised, structured and practiced. To assist this, RBFRS has trained all operational and control staff in the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Program.

This has given us the ability to establish joint interoperability principles and ways of working.

The headquarters move suffered from inclement weather delays and unrealistic completion dates, the call handling suit was delayed due to final user testing being delayed. RBFRS are keen to learn from these experiences and will use the learning to assist in delivering future projects.

We offered local residents value for money by maintaining council tax precepts at the same level as the previous year. (£60.66 for a Band D property).

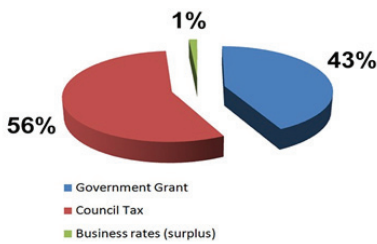
With the Government grant we receive and funding from Council Tax, the Authority approved a revenue budget for 2014/15 of £34.384 million, representing £39.80 per-head of population cost. This was a decrease of 0.31% over the comparable figure for 2013/14 and further savings were achieved by freezing recruitment and running departments with existing vacancies.

Industrial action throughout 2014/15 has provided the Authority with a challenge in maintaining a service during periods of strike. This has incurred a cost of £894,000, this was absorbed within the overall revenue budget. We recruited and trained 'emergency fire crews' to help in providing cover during strike periods.

In continuing to manage our resources, we will need to make further savings in 2015/16 to meet the 1.6% budget reduction. We plan to achieve this through running a joint Thames Valley Fire Control Service and continuing to manage recruitment and vacancies.

## How we were funded in 2014/15

Royal Berkshire Fire Authority's budget for 2014-15 was £34.38 million (£34.5 million in 2013-14). This money came from three sources:



1. Government grant of £14.61 million (which was 7.7 percent lower than the previous year)
2. Council tax from Berkshire residents contributed £19.3 million
3. Localised business rates – for the first time this year, the fire authority received £473,000 from a surplus of business rates due to local economic growth.

### Priority projects

- ◆ Progressed arrangements for a Thames Valley Fire Control Service
- ◆ Focused on the future arrangements for Dee Road Fire Station
- ◆ Relocated Windsor Fire Station to Tinkers Lane
- ◆ Focused on improving our IT infrastructure Delivered a shared procurement service with Buckinghamshire FRS
- ◆ Initiated a property asset management plan

## Procurement Shared Service

Following discussion between RBFRS and B&MKFRS, it was agreed to pilot a shared procurement service from January 2014 to March 2015. During this period a full procurement service, including tendering, quotations and supplier management, was offered to both services. This created commercial opportunities and leverage along with standardisation of products and services through collaborative working. Throughout the year, the share service generated savings for RBFRS in the region of £81,000 and brought an income to RBFRS of £58,000. Due to the success of the shared service, a new substantive Procurement Shared Service commences from 1st April 2015.

## New Windsor Fire Station

Following the approval for the closure of the former Windsor Fire Station, a partnership was formed between Royal Berkshire Fire Authority and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM); the objective was to identify a suitable location for a new fire station in the Windsor area.

The creation of a cross-directorate project team led to the development of excellent working relationships, with a continuous effective link to the team in RBWM. Following a structured project management regime, regular meetings were held, during which the appointed Work Package Leads provided updates in regard to their respective area of work. Hard work and effective working links with the Royal Borough resulted in a modern, purpose-built fire station for the community. The project was completed on time and to budget and resulted in a better facility than originally planned. Operations commenced from the new site in November 2014, with the formal opening taking place in March 2015.

## Wokingham Fire Station

Following the opening of our new fire station at Wokingham it was identified that the construction of the station was not to the specification detailed in the plans. This has led to substantial work being undertaken in 2014-15 to identify how to rectify the problems with the least disruption to frontline staff and more importantly to continue to provide emergency response for the community of Wokingham. Once again RBFRS will continue to learn from its experiences in building a new fire station and the lessons learnt here will assist in future station builds.

# People

## Key Headlines

### **Staff performance management**

There was a considerable improvement in the number of performance development interviews carried out with over 80% completed in 2014-15 compared to 43% in the previous year.

### **Staff diversity**

The target for workforce representation from BME groups was set at 5% and stood at 4.9% at the end of the year despite very little recruitment activity.

### **Staff complaints**

We aimed to reduce the number of complaints staff made about employment issues to less than 2.2% and recorded a figure of 1.91 percent.

### **Number of RIDDOR accidents (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations)**

We had seven RIDDOR accidents this year, with one major accident, compared with 11 last year.

### **Number of accidents to staff**

In total, for 2014/15, there were 83 injury accidents, a decrease of 34 accidents compared with the previous year. Slips and trips and hitting fixed objects remain the highest causes of accidents leading to strains and sprains and cuts and bruise type injuries. Following a manual handling refresher course for all operational personnel in 2012, we have seen a significant reduction in the number manual handling accidents, from 17 to 6.

## Developments over the past year

### **Institute of Directors health and safety checklist**

Following completion of the Institute of Directors health and safety checklist with the directors and senior management team, we carried out a survey. Positive feedback was received and some areas for further development were identified. We will be completing a safety climate survey this year, to investigate the safety culture within RBFRS, which will be open to all employees.

### **Health and Safety Benchmarking**

To enable us to benchmark our health and safety performance, we have developed reporting criteria with the SE fire and rescue services to benchmark accidents and causes. This will enable us to identify best practice and learning from others.

### **Musculoskeletal (MSK) Specialist**

A three year project has been set up to focus on improving musculoskeletal health and reduce the number of musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) which attribute to the highest cause for sickness absence within the service.

A Musculoskeletal Specialist has been appointed for this project. The project, which has been successful in the USA, involves screening individuals and prescribing a personal exercise plan, with the objective to improve musculoskeletal health. Although we already have physiotherapy services in place, this is often used after an injury has occurred, whereas the MSK project is seen as preventative initiative.

## Staff Sickness

Throughout 2014-15, we undertook a piece of work to benchmark ourselves against the sickness levels of other fire and rescue services and, as a result, have identified that we have relatively high sickness levels in comparison. We have developed and agreed a program of work to support the health and well-being of all our staff, providing targeted assistance to improve performance.

## Staff Engagement

As part of a priority project for 14/15 we ran a staff engagement exercise to gather ideas on what staff thought we could do to deliver the Fire Authority's policy agenda. We specifically asked for ideas on how they thought we could work better to save money, improve efficiency, improve service or generate income.

Middle managers supported by senior managers ran over 60 sessions through November and December. This was made a little more challenging by a period of industrial action, even during this challenging time over 450 ideas were generated. A panel of 12 staff volunteers, from across the service, have come together to evaluate the ideas and make recommendation to CMT for implementation in early 15/16.

## Health and Fitness Challenges

Firefighter Andrew Grist from Slough White Watch undertook 14 challenges which ranged from "The Wall" a 69 mile Ultra marathon to swimming across the Solent.

The final challenge of the year saw him complete 7 marathons in 7 consecutive days.

## Health and Fitness Workshops

We are looking at how to improve the physical fitness and mental health of our staff. We are working with staff to get their views on health promotion, fitness activities and mental health supports in line with the strategic commitment "improving the fitness and health of firefighters". This work will inform our future policies for fitness, mental health and the ageing workforce.

## Health Promotion

Last year we continued our drive to promote a healthy workplace, taking part in the Global Corporate Challenge to raise awareness of the benefits of being active. We introduced nutrition workshops and ran a health fair to provide taster sessions on activities to promote wellbeing such as yoga and mindfulness. We hosted a number of guest exhibitors such as NHS Berkshire Talking Therapies and The Firefighter's Charity. We continue to promote the cycle to work scheme and provide information and articles to staff to encourage individuals to engage in a more active lifestyle.

Fire Stations and our Headquarters have a gym with equipment to facilitate cardiovascular and weight training activities. Each shift has a physical training instructor to provide a structured training session taking into account all individual needs.





# Assurance and Performance

## Key Headlines

### Annual Statement of Assurance

Our annual statement of assurance is available on the [RBFRS website](#).

### Purpose

The purpose of this Statement of Assurance is for Royal Berkshire Fire Authority (RBFA) to formally confirm the adequacy of arrangements for the effective management of financial, governance and operational matters in Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service. The Statement has been prepared and published in accordance with a requirement set out in the **National Framework for fire and rescue services in England**.

The Statement of Assurance is structured to show headline judgments about our financial governance and operational arrangements. These judgments confirm whether the necessary standards are being 'Fully', 'Substantially', or 'Partially' met.

## Developments over the past year

### RBFRS Internal Audit

Audit is an important part of providing assurance that our activities are conducted and presented fairly and accurately. We have external auditors to give statutory assurance and internal auditors to provide financial and governance audits.

To help us improve as an organisation we have invested in training RBFRS staff in a recognised audit qualification. This enables us to perform our own internal audits to recognised standards.

During 2014/15 we audited 6 areas including our safeguarding processes, arrangements for staff leave, process for delivering Home Fire Safety Checks and the recording of training.

### Peer Challenge

In February 2014, we were externally assessed by a Peer Challenge team made up of the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) of Dorset (lead peer), senior fire officers from Norfolk, Leicestershire and Northern Ireland, a representative of Kirklees Council and two representatives from the local government association.

Evidence and feedback was gathered from a variety of sources ranging from interviews, focus groups and visiting fire stations. This was then cross-referenced through a process known as 'triangulation' before being assimilated into broad themes.

The focus of the assessment was:

- ◆ Leadership and Corporate Capacity
- ◆ Risk Management
- ◆ Operational Risk Information
- ◆ Training and development

The assessment identified there is appetite for change, and a strong buzz in the organisation about the changes that may happen as a result of the appointment of a new CFO and the forthcoming move to a new Service headquarters. This appetite provides an excellent opportunity for a comprehensive change program which the new CFO is already pursuing. The team recommended that this program covers all areas: organisational structure, business processes, Information Technology (IT), and the direction of travel of the organisation, all stemming from a clear vision for the future. It is important that the development of a strong performance management culture is central to this change program.

## Vision, Mission and Purpose



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”*

Our purpose is To protect and improve the quality of life for the people in Berkshire and those who travel through Berkshire whether on business or pleasure.

To ensure we are effective in achieving this vision, mission and purpose and deliver services which you value we have six strategic commitments. These help us to plan effectively and we measure how well we are performing against the outcomes for each aim through our comprehensive performance management framework.



***PREVENTING PROTECTING RESPONDING***

## RBFRS Key Performance Measures and Targets

The criterion for an amber result is a measure that misses target by 10% or less.

The criterion for a blue result is 20% greater than / improvement on, target

Reference	Description of Performance Measure	Actual			Target	
		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2014/15	
Prevention		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2014/15	
PM 5	Fire Victims	Deaths - Accidental Dwelling	7	4	3	0
PM 6		Casualties - Accidental Dwelling	33	30	26	31
PM1	Primary fires	Total	933	921	929	925
PM 2		Delierate	185	175	146	221
PM 3	Secondary fires	Delierate	301	300	246	433
PM 7	Malicious False Alarms	Total	100	94	108	87
PM 4	Accidental dwelling fires	Total	373	361	379	350
PM 16		% confined to room of origin	88	86	85	90
PM 8		% where no smoke alarm was fitted	19	16	16	15
PM 9	Number of completed Home Fire Safety Checks		6294	6036	8550	7500

Reference	Description of Performance Measure	Actual			Target
		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2014/15
Protection		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2014/15
PM 10	Number of commercial AFA's	878	1012	1015	920
PM 11	Number of Primary fires at property under Regulations reform order	203	150	164	150
PM 12	Number of risk based inspections by fire safety officers	3012	2620	2556	2200

Reference	Description of Performance Measure	Actual			Target
		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2014/15
Response		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2014/15
PM 13	% 1st pump attendances in 10 minutes at dwelling fires - checked failures	94	96	93	94
PM 14	% 1st pump attendances in 10 minutes and 2nd pump in 12 minutes at dwelling fires - checked failures	88	92	88.6	88
PM 15	% 1st pump attendances in 11 minutes at RTCs - checked failures	92	93	90.8	90
PM 19	% of domestic respondents satisfied with the overall service	N/A	100	100	96.5

Reference	Description of Performance Measure	Actual			Target
		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2014/15
Use of Resources		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2014/15
PM 17	Carbon footprint CO2 from FRS operations	1940	1798	1522	1855
PM 18	Carbon footprint CO2 from buildings	1358	1114	1020	1133

## RBFRS Key Performance Measures and Targets

Reference	Description of Performance Measure	Actual			Target
		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2014/15
People (Satisfaction)					
PM 20	Complaints received from the public	N/A	28	23	N/A
PM 31	% of staff making a complaint	2.2	2.3	2.2	2.19
PM 32	% of Leavers recommending RBFRS	69	76	82	76

Reference	Description of Performance Measure	Actual			Target
		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2014/15
People					
PM 26	% of eligible staff with Personal Development Interviews completed	85.4	70	85.7	100
PM 27	% of staff from ethnic minorities	5	5	4.9	5
PM 28	% of staff recruited from ethnic minorities	0	0	10.4	14
PM 29	% of female firefighters	3.26	3	2.9	4
PM 30	% of female uniform staff recruited	0	0	0	15

Reference	Description of Performance Measure	Actual			Target
		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2014/15
People (Health and Safety)					
PM 21	Number of accidents to staff	80	117	82	96
PM 22	Number of RIDDOR accidents	10	12	7	10
PM 23	Number of shifts lost to short term sickness per employee	5.1	4.3	5.5	5.1
PM 24	% Ill Health Retirements as a percentage of Uniform Staff	0	0.2	0	0
PM 25	% Ill Health Retirements as a percentage of Non Uniform Staff	0	0	0	0

# ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

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यदि आप यह जानकारी हिन्दी में चाहते हैं तो कृपया हमारा संपर्क करें

જો તમને આ માહિતી ગુજરાતી માં જોઈતી હોય તો મહેરબાની કરી અમારો સંપર્ક કરો

Jeśli wymagasz tej informacji po POLSKU, proszę się z nami skontaktować

ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات اردو میں درکار ہوں، تو ہم سے رابطہ کیجئے