

Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service Plan 2010 to 2013

draft consultation objectives



“ Help us to be ‘the best
fire and rescue service
in the country’

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We review and update our service plan every year because we want it to be relevant to the changing environment in which we serve, and we want to be sure that the services we provide focus on dealing with current and possible risks our communities may face in the future.

We know we don't have all the answers so we welcome comments on our objectives from anyone who has an interest in our work, including the public, the business community, our staff, our partners and other organisations.



**HAMPSHIRE
FIRE AND
RESCUE
SERVICE**

How are our objectives linked?

Our plan for 2010 to 2013 shows how we will improve our services to deal with the risks that the public face. It will also show how we plan to help our staff to provide these services.



At the heart of these improvements is our commitment to set standards for how quickly we respond to emergency calls based on how serious the call is. We intend to respond faster to more serious emergencies such as house fires or road traffic accidents, compared to less serious incidents such as small outdoor fires. We will introduce a number of innovative ideas to make sure that the right number of firefighters are sent to emergencies and arrive as quickly as possible, depending on how serious the incident is.

We will improve our fire prevention and other safety work by introducing a mobile service that can reach all of our communities, particularly those most at risk from fire. We understand the pressures on public finances and, as a responsible public service, we will review all of our staffing levels to make sure we provide services with the most efficient staffing levels. We will change our staffing levels if we think we need to.

Our first objective, to set emergency response standards based on the type of emergency calls we receive, will mean we can prioritise how our

staff crew our fire engines. This means we can match our emergency responses to the type of emergency calls we receive. We can also keep free frontline firefighters for dedicated training time that will not be interrupted by emergency calls. This is our second objective and is called our 'strategic reserve'. We will use some of these firefighters to staff smaller fire engines to respond to less serious incidents in our third objective, which introduces small fires teams in specific locations.

Our fourth objective will help us to respond faster to incidents in rural areas by introducing initial response teams, and we will provide fire prevention services direct to communities through our fifth objective, which introduces mobile community contact points.

In our sixth objective, we will look to benefit from the efficiencies that can be made by working with other fire services in the South East, and we will lead on a fire investigation service provided to a number of counties. Finally, in objective seven, we will review all our staffing levels to identify any areas where we can provide services with less people.

01 New risk based response standards



What and why?

Over the last year we have reviewed our response standards to make sure that we arrive at different types of incidents in reasonable times. The new response standards will fall into three categories.

- 'critical incidents' – eight minutes
- 'non-critical incidents' – 15 minutes
- 'other incidents' – 60 minutes

By using these response standards we will be able to focus on and dedicate more resources to incidents that are life-threatening and may damage property.

How and when?

We will check these new response standards by developing our local performance indicators. We will aim for a yearly improvement in our performance to achieve an eight-minute response time in 80% of critical incidents by April 2013.

We will introduce these new response standards from April 2010.

02 Making best use of our firefighters



What and why?

At certain times of the day we can make better use of our firefighters. By putting the extra firefighters on a one-hour delay we can make better use of their time. We call this our 'strategic reserve', and it will not affect our ability to respond to incidents.

In Southampton, Basingstoke and Portsmouth, we will use firefighters to create a 'strategic reserve' between 10am and 10pm. These firefighters will work on the small fires vehicle and mobile community contact point.

We will also create a 'strategic reserve' for Rushmoor between 10am and 6pm to provide extra time for training.

How and when?

We will start by putting firefighters from Southampton and Rushmoor into our strategic reserve in April 2010. We will add to the strategic reserve with firefighters from Basingstoke and Portsmouth in April 2011.

03 Tackling small fires in a better way

What and why?

Most small fires are started deliberately, and they are the main type of fire we have to deal with. We will introduce teams to prevent and deal with non-critical incidents, which means our fire engines will be free to tackle critical incidents.

This will also mean training and community safety activities are not disrupted.

How and when?

We will learn from our experience of the first response vehicle and from other fire and rescue services who have put similar teams in place, and replace the first response vehicle with a small fires vehicle based at Redbridge Hill. This will allow us to create a team which will work across Southampton in April 2010. We will then create teams in Basingstoke and Portsmouth in 2011.

These teams will work between 10am and 10pm, when most of these types of incidents happen, and part of the team will come from our strategic reserve.

04 Getting to incidents in rural areas faster

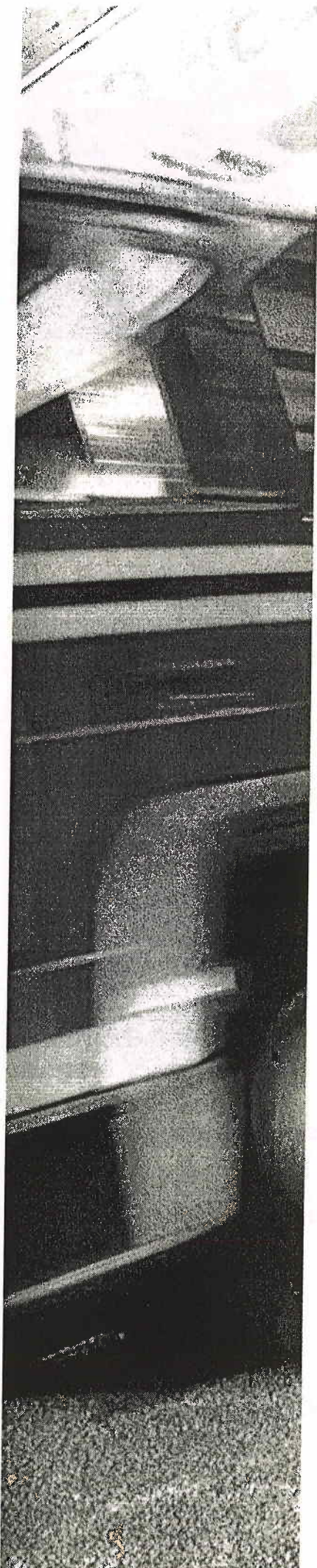
What and why?

The way on call firefighters currently respond to our stations does not provide the fastest response to an emergency. We will provide initial response teams and vehicles for retained duty stations to improve our response times.

How and when?

We will find the most suitable area in which to pilot this, to start in June 2011. We will then consider introducing this in other areas of the county.

We will look into how our firefighters can get to incidents directly from their home or place of work with the right equipment. This will mean providing smaller vehicles to respond to incidents with the right equipment for different incidents that may happen in that area.



05 Increasing our contact with the public

What and why?

We will introduce mobile community contact points which will be supported by teams to help reduce the risk of fires and other emergencies.

How and when?

After introducing our community contact point in Portsmouth, we will develop our ability to contact the public by introducing mobile contact points in areas of the county that need them most.

We will use these vehicles in a range of ways to inform the public, and they will help us to meet members of local communities face-to-face. This will be a community asset that we can share with others to help deal with local problems.

We plan to introduce mobile community contact points in Southampton and Basingstoke in April 2011. We will consider introducing community contact points in other areas of the county in the future.



06 Creating a dedicated fire investigation service

What and why?

Investigating fires is an important part of our work. It is essential that we correctly identify the causes of fire, and where arson is involved we will need to examine and record evidence to help prosecute those responsible. We want to improve our knowledge and expertise but also deliver this service in a more efficient way.

We will introduce a dedicated team with the right skills and knowledge, which will create a consistent approach to investigating fires and improve our service. This approach will also free up our managers' time, along with creating savings through offering to create this service to other fire and rescue services in the South East region.

How and when?

We will provide a dedicated team to support incidents where fires need to be investigated. We will look to work with other fire and rescue services in the South East region to expand the team and provide this support in other counties.

We expect to introduce a dedicated team in June 2010.



07 Reviewing our staff numbers

What and why?

We will review the numbers of staff in all areas of our service to make sure we have the right number to deliver our services. This will include projects such as the efficient and flexible crewing project, the retained-duty system strategy and the directorate review. We will also make sure that we consider all areas of our service.

We know that public funding will be under pressure in the future and we will be looking ahead to make sure that we have the right number of staff.

How and when?

We will look into more efficient ways of providing the current level of service without affecting safety or the quality of our service.

The efficient and flexible crewing objective in last year's service plan allows us to use fewer firefighters at wholetime fire stations. We will stop wholetime firefighter recruitment from April 2010 until we reach the right staffing numbers.

We will develop a salary scheme and more suitable employment contracts for our retained staff using information we get from our retained management system. This will mean we have more control over how many members of staff we need to provide our service. We will introduce this by February 2011.

Following on from our directorate review, we will examine our headquarters' departments to make sure they are working efficiently and that they have the right number of staff. We will start to do this on 1 April 2010, and we will report our findings to the service management team in October 2010.

