

5. IRMP 2011/12 Recommendation 4: Fire Cover Review

Purpose of report

1. To inform the Policy and Resources Committee of the outcomes of the review, to consider the recommendations and approve a period of engagement with affected stakeholders.
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Recommendations

The Chief Fire Officer recommends that:

- i) the 2011/12 IRMP Recommendation 4 Fire Cover Review is noted; and***
- ii) the following recommendations are subjected to eight weeks consultation with stakeholders:***
 - to reduce the number of firefighting staff on each watch at the three existing day crewed fire stations (Malvern, Evesham and Droitwich) from eight to seven;***
 - to reduce the number of firefighting staff on each watch at Hereford and Worcester fire stations from 14 to 12.5 (average between the two stations);***
 - to implement a new crewing pattern (Day Crewing Plus) at Bromsgrove, leading to a reduction in the establishment from 28 to 14 and;***
 - there are no changes to the provision of the third Retained Duty System (RDS) appliance at Hereford, Worcester and Redditch.***

Introduction and Background

2. As part of the current IRMP 2011/12 action plan Recommendation 4 stated:

'We will review our fire cover and response arrangements', contained within this statement are three elements which were to be reviewed:
 1. The current crewing arrangements at Bromsgrove.
 2. The requirement of a third appliance at Hereford, Worcester and Redditch.
 3. The appropriate number of personnel on each watch at Wholetime and Day Crewed stations.

3. The recommendation to review these areas of fire cover was the subject of consultation for twelve weeks during 2010 and was subsequently approved for review in 2011/12. The review has been completed and accepted by the Senior Management Board (SMB). The review initially began with an extensive information gathering phase relying on not only statistical data, but historical activity data, anecdotal information, professional judgement and predictive data. Staff were consulted during the review and their feedback has been considered. The services of an external company were also utilised to analyse the data and run predictive scenarios.
4. It is intended that a further report on the results of the proposed consultation will be submitted to the next meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee on 7 June 2012 before being referred onto the FRA with the Committee's recommendations. However, if the responses from the consultation require in depth analysis and assessment it may not be possible to report back to the Committee on 7 June 2012 and it is imperative that the matter is considered at the next meeting of the FRA in order to allow enough time for implementation. In such circumstances it is proposed that the Committee recommend to the FRA the acceptance of the recommendations set out above and the feedback on consultation will be taken straight to the FRA meeting on 20 June 2012.

Proposals

5. The outcomes of the review identified the following:
 - Bromsgrove is suitable for a new crewing system realising significant cost benefits through a reduction of up to 50% of the current staff at the station, this being without any reduction in fire cover or numbers of crew on the appliance and maintaining the same response time as now.
 - Removal of a third appliance at Hereford, Worcester and Redditch is not recommended. Whilst there is no clear case for each station to retain three appliances, it is determined that the removal of any Retained Duty System (RDS) appliance from these stations will have wider organisational impacts that will need consideration. These considerations should be balanced against the limited cost benefit of each appliances' removal.
 - Current staffing numbers at selected Wholtime and Day Crewed stations can be reduced without impact to service delivery.
6. The above outcomes have the potential to provide a saving of approximately £1million, without any direct changes to the service provided to the communities of Herefordshire and Worcestershire. The existing number of appliances and current response times would remain unchanged. These efficiencies would be provided through the employment of less uniformed personnel, with a reduction in the current "establishment" and changes to working practices. It is anticipated that this can be achieved through the loss of existing uniformed staff, through 'natural turnover' during the next three years.

Bromsgrove

7. Bromsgrove provides an opportunity for a new type of crewing system due to its low overall levels of call activity. The new proposed system is very similar to the current “day crewed” model used at Evesham, Droitwich and Malvern, which used to be in place at Bromsgrove prior to 1996. The primary difference with the new system is the manner in which the night cover is delivered. This is provided by rooms on the station for staff to reside in, rather than requiring the staff to live in close proximity to the station and respond from their home during these hours.
8. This has two primary benefits, firstly the response is immediate 24/7 and there is no delay due to responding from home during the night, giving the same response to that which is currently provided in Bromsgrove. Secondly the new system is open to a greater number of staff as there is no requirement to move home into the area. The number of staff required to work this new system, called day crewing plus (DCP), is 50% less than the current wholetime model. The staff receive appropriate additional remuneration for the commitment which will make the system financially attractive to some staff.

Third appliance at Hereford, Worcester and Redditch

9. The review highlighted through the activity analysis of Redditch, Hereford and Worcester, that the provision of three appliances at each location could not be supported in isolation. However, wider consideration of the overall fire cover benefits across the Service did offer some evidence against this finding, especially in Hereford and Redditch. The report concluded that combined with the wider fire cover considerations, the provision of the third RDS appliance at these locations did offer excellent value for money. Therefore this review does not propose any alteration to this provision. The disestablishment of these existing units (one RDS appliance at each location) would see a loss of 7% of the Service’s overall fire cover and only provide a saving in salaries of £120k (approximately).

Staffing Levels

10. This review has highlighted that after any proposed changes were implemented the remaining “establishment” of employed full time uniformed staff would still provide a resilient level of additional staff. This capacity is used daily for predictable absences, such as leave and training and for unplanned absences, such as sickness. Where further resilience is required due to unplanned or temporary staff shortages, staff can be offered the opportunity to work overtime. This overtime system called the “Resilience Register” has been utilised in this way successfully for a number of years. These proposals have also been calculated on standard crewing of five per first wholetime appliance. Therefore as an additional layer of resilience the Service can reduce this to four per appliance without compromising response protocols, potentially providing up to eight additional members of operational staff across the Service at any given time.

Supplementary issues identified

11. It was noted that the Redditch model, of one wholetime crewed appliance and two RDS appliances, currently offers high levels of resilience in a cost effective manner for a three appliance station. Currently the provision of two crewed appliances at both Hereford and Worcester and a single RDS appliance at each unit is an area where

further efficiencies could be identified. With RDS appliances offering little scope for efficiency savings (and thus offering a low cost form of fire cover) there may be an opportunity to identify efficiencies of up to £700,000 per (second) wholtime appliance at Hereford and Worcester stations, whilst retaining three appliances at each location. However, this would change the speed of response provided to the public whereby only the first appliance would be an immediate response and the further two appliances would be subject to a delay due to response times of RDS staff, as is currently the case at Redditch.

This would still provide a response within the current Authority standards and quicker than at many other locations in the two Counties. This report does not recommend any changes to the status of the second appliance at Hereford and Worcester station but it may be a consideration in the future.

Engagement and consultation

12. Subject to approval it is proposed that an engagement and consultation programme of eight weeks is undertaken with internal stakeholders and selected partners in order to provide feedback for submission to this Committee before the matter is considered by the Fire and Rescue Authority in June 2012.. **As the changes proposed do not affect the provision of fire cover currently provided to the public**, it is proposed that in accordance with the principles of consultation, (i.e. that consultation should be proportionate to the changes and with those most affected), this consultation and engagement programme will be directed at internal staff and other interested parties. Further details regarding the programme are attached in Appendix 1.
13. A direct programme of engagement and consultation was undertaken during the review. During this next phase of engagement all staff and interested parties will have access to additional information and a further series of visits and meetings, similar to those undertaken during the review, will also be undertaken during this eight week engagement period.

Potential Efficiencies

14. Table 1: Bromsgrove proposed efficiencies

Description of Cost	Amount
Current system	£1,074,473
DCP fixed costs*	- £659,473
Variable Costs	- £0
Total Savings	£415,000

*Note: The figures above for Bromsgrove Day Crewing Plus (DCP) are based on 14 personnel with an enhancement of 20%.

15. Table 2: Proposed efficiencies by reduction in establishments

Station	Post Reductions	Financial Savings
Hereford and Worcester	-12	£435,192
Droitwich, Evesham, Malvern	-6	£247,272
Total net reduction of posts	-18	£682,464

Note: This reduces the day crewed stations establishment levels from 8 to 7 per watch and Hereford and Worcester stations to an average of 12.5 personnel per watch. This combined with the reduction in posts at Bromsgrove would require an overall reduction of 32 operational posts.

Financial Considerations

Consideration	Yes/No	Reference in Report i.e. paragraph no.
There are financial issues that require consideration	Yes	Paragraphs 13 and 14. Future adoption of recommendations will realise potential efficiencies.

Legal Considerations

Consideration	Yes/No	Reference in Report i.e. paragraph no.
There are legal issues e.g. contractual and procurement, reputational issues that require consideration	Yes	Paragraphs 6, 7 and 9. Potential changes to crewing would require new staff contracts.

Additional Considerations

16. The table below sets out any additional issues arising from the proposals contained in this report and identifies the relevant paragraphs in the report where such issues are addressed.

Consideration	Yes/No	Reference in Report i.e. paragraph no.
Resources (e.g. Assets, ICT, Human Resources, Training & Development, Sustainability).	Yes	Entire Report. Media & Communications, Service Delivery, HR, Training and Finance
Strategic Policy Links (e.g. IRMP, Authority Plan, Equality & Diversity, Partnerships, Environmental Impact).	Yes	Entire report – IRMP, Asset Management Strategy.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (e.g. risk management and control measures, risk register score).	Yes	Paragraphs 7 and 9. Limited risk that not enough staff are attracted to operate proposed new shift system. Additional remuneration and conditions should make system attractive.
Consultation with Representative Bodies	Yes	Early engagement with Trade Unions on all proposals.

Conclusion/Summary

17. The recommendations for change within this paper are based upon an extensive and complex review. These proposals offer a large scale efficiency saving with no change in the level of service currently provided to the community. There will be opportunities for some staff to work an alternative new flexible shift pattern at Bromsgrove, alongside those already in place throughout the Service and be remunerated accordingly. The potential increased use of the resilience register for unplanned deficiencies, rather than the permanent employment of additional staff not only offers a more efficient model of resilience, but will provide those staff who are willing, with an opportunity to earn extra income.
18. The Service is committed to Firefighter and community safety, as well as delivering quality services. During this period of austerity where resources are being reduced these proposals aim to ensure that with careful implementation and management, none of these principles are compromised.

Background Paper

Full Review Report

Supporting Information

Appendix 1: Review of Fire Cover and Response Arrangements

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Recommendation 4

Review of Fire Cover and Response Arrangements

FRA Report



HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

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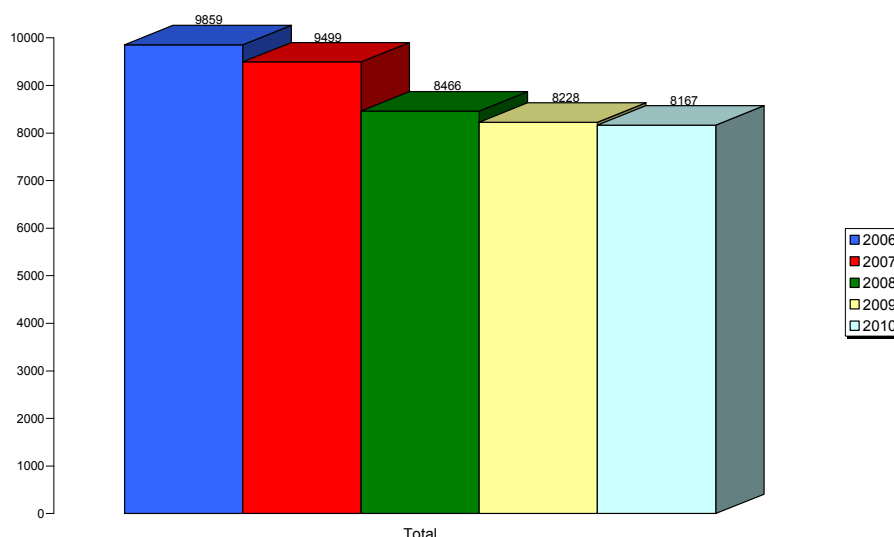
1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 An Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) public consultation process took place in 2010 to propose a review of many aspects of the organisation, which focused on seven key recommendations.
- 1.2 This report is a review of IRMP Recommendation 4 which states that '*we will review our fire cover and response arrangements.*' Contained within this statement are three elements, which are to review:
 1. The current crewing arrangements at Bromsgrove.
 2. The requirement of a third appliance at Hereford, Worcester and Redditch.
 3. The appropriate number of personnel on each watch at Wholetime and Day Crewed Stations.
- 1.3 In considering the three elements, a number of areas were reviewed to provide a range of options for change that are balanced and have community impacts and needs at their heart. This report provides a summary of the outcomes of the review and the rationale behind these proposals.
- 1.4 This review does not propose the reduction of any appliances from the fleet or in the current provision, nor does it increase or affect any of the current responses times of appliances from any location.
- 1.5 In analysing all available evidence and alternative options, the following proposals are made:
 - Bromsgrove is suitable for transition to a new crewing system realising significant cost benefits.
 - Removal of a third appliance at Hereford, Worcester and Redditch is not recommended. Whilst there is no clear single case for each Station to retain three appliances, it is determined that the removal of any Retained Duty System (RDS) appliance from these Stations will have wider organisational resilience impacts that would need consideration. This should be balanced against the limited cost benefit of each appliance's removal.
 - Current staffing numbers at selected Wholetime and Day Crewed Stations can be reduced without impact to service delivery.

Introduction

- 1.6 The Service has seen a decline in fire occurrence activity levels over the last 5 years, to a point where the Service is 17% less active than it was in 2006(See Fig 1).

Fig 1. All incidents between 01 January 2006-31 December 2010



- 1.7 All of the proposals in this review could be implemented if activity levels were at 2006 levels, however in view of the falling activity levels and in aiming to fulfil the challenges posed by the Comprehensive Spending Review 2010 (CSR 2010), it is essential for the Service to align available resources to risk. Modern demands place modern pressures on Fire and Rescue Services to look at innovative solutions that deliver high quality services for less. This should be viewed as an opportunity to review existing and previous models of delivery for their efficacy and value for money. Foremost in the delivery of our service is the requirement to meet the needs of the communities we serve and in meeting that delivery, that we offer value for money.

Proposed Options for Change

PART A

Review the Current Crewing Arrangements at Bromsgrove

This review has established that Bromsgrove is suitable for the implementation of alternative crewing arrangements.

Option A1	Bromsgrove Wholetime (252) change to LLAR
Option A2	Bromsgrove Wholetime (252) change to Day-Crewing Plus
Option A3	Bromsgrove Wholetime (252) change to Day-Crewed
Option A4	Bromsgrove Wholetime (252) change to RDS

PART B

Review the requirements of a third appliance at Hereford, Worcester and Redditch

Analysis in this review has shown that an appliance at Hereford, Worcester and Redditch could be removed. However, considerations of resilience, effective savings and wider impacts have resulted in a recommendation not to remove the third RDS appliance from Hereford, Worcester or Redditch.

Option B1	Removal of the third appliance from Hereford
Option B2	Removal of the third appliance from Worcester
Option B3	Removal of the third appliance from Redditch
Option B4	Consider alternative crewing options

PART C

The appropriate number of personnel on each watch at Wholetime and Day-Crewed Stations

Analysis of historical global crewing figures benchmarked against nationally used levels have confirmed that shift establishment figures can be reduced at Hereford, Worcester, Droitwich, Evesham and Malvern. This is in line with previous crewing levels at the Day Crewed Station and appropriate for Hereford and Worcester now that special appliances are no longer primary crewed. This also brings the day crewing watch levels in line with those Kidderminster and Redditch, which also similarly crew one wholetime appliance.

Option C1	Reduce Hereford and Worcester shift establishment from 14 to 13 and Droitwich, Evesham and Malvern establishments from 8 to 7
Option C2	Reduce Hereford and Worcester shift establishment from 14 to 12.5 and Droitwich, Evesham and Malvern establishments from 8 to 7
Option C3	Reduce Hereford and Worcester shift establishment from 14 to 12 and Droitwich, Evesham and Malvern establishments from 8 to 7

2. PART A

Current Crewing Arrangements at Bromsgrove

- 2.1 Bromsgrove Wholetime (WT) appliance (252) has seen a reduction in mobilisations from 631 in 2008 to 554 in 2010. This low figure is likely to be reduced further to 510 (approximation) due to the proposed changes to our response to Automatic Fire Alarms (IRMP Recommendation 3).

Fig 2. Activity for Bromsgrove appliances over 3 years within Bromsgrove Station area

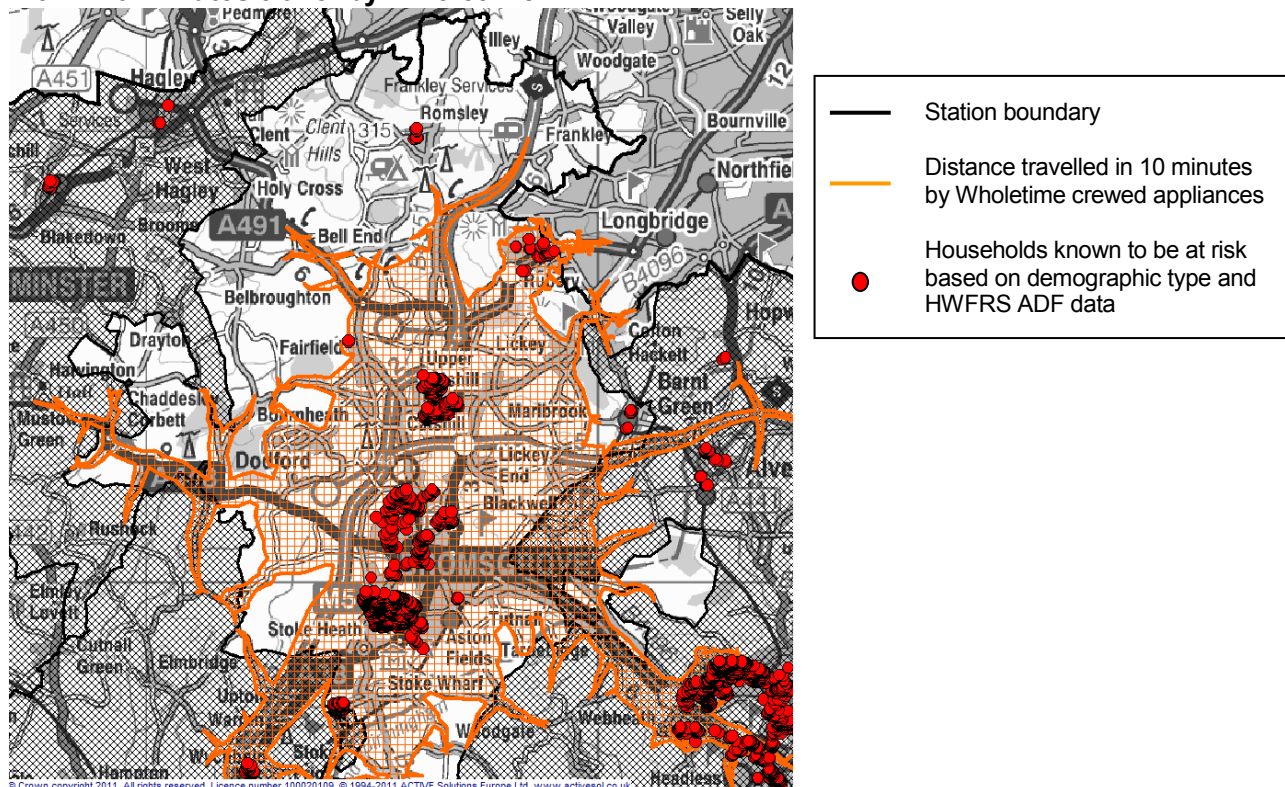
Call Sign	2008	2009	2010
WT App 252	631	504	554
RDS App 251	207	295	158

- 2.2 Based on activity for Bromsgrove Station from January – December 2010, only 14% of mobilisations take place between 2300 hrs and 0700 hrs. This equates to an average of 3 mobilisations during these hours per week. Due to the current staffing model, crewing numbers are still applied at the same levels irrespective of call volume.

Bromsgrove

- 2.3 Bromsgrove Station lies within Bromsgrove District Council area in the north Worcestershire. The district has a total population of around 93,400 and there are about 38,000 households. The largest town in the district is Bromsgrove with a population of about 35,000. The district covers an area of some 84 square miles, though Bromsgrove Station ground itself covers a smaller area of just over 46.33 square miles.
- 2.4 The Station ground is bordered by Redditch to the southeast, Droitwich to the southwest and Kidderminster to the northwest. The Station ground also covers two motorways with the M42 starting at junction 4a of the M5.
- 2.5 Both Bromsgrove appliances mobilised 712 times in 2010 on their Station ground (less than 1,000 per year including calls to other Station areas). Activity for 252 in the Station ground represents approximately 6% of all Service overall operational activity. The Station also receives and provides operational support from West Midlands Fire Service, which borders the Station ground to the north. Additionally the Station also currently provides enhanced aerial support with a Hydraulic Platform.
- 2.6 When viewing the risk profile of Bromsgrove it can be seen in Figure 3 below that the most at risk groups are located within the 10 minute travel distance, as are nearly all occurrences of accidental dwelling fires in this area.

Fig 3. Location of households known to be at risk based on demographic type and HWFRS Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADF) data between Feb 2007 and Feb 2010 within 10 minutes travel by Wholetime



Service Assets

Fig 4. Vehicles at Station 25 – Bromsgrove

Call sign	Appliance Type	Description
251 RDS	Standard appliance	Standard appliance – standard firefighting and RTC capability
252 WT	Rescue appliance	Rescue appliance – an standard firefighting appliance with an enhanced RTC capability
256	Hydraulic Platform (HP)	Specialist appliance that provides an increased aerial reach for rescues and water delivery

Performance

- 2.7 Figure 5 shows the activity by Bromsgrove appliances within their own Station area. The appliances are most busy at certain incident types at different times of the day: for example they are busiest attending False Alarms due to Apparatus at 1200 hours but are most active at primary fires at 2100 hrs. However activity across the Station area has dropped over the past three years. The appliances most often attend false alarms, which represent 44% of all activity, followed by attending primary fires.

Fig 5. Mobilisations by all Bromsgrove Station appliances within Bromsgrove Station Area

Incident Type	2008	2009	2010
False Alarms	412	387	364
Primary Fire	123	140	127
RTC	95	107	62
Secondary Fire	115	90	67
Special Service	83	69	87
Chimney Fire	10	6	5
Total Mobilisations	838	799	712

Crewing System Overview

- 2.8 The current Wholetime Duty System used at Bromsgrove is based on the traditional firefighters' shift system. Staff work two 9 hour days followed by two 15 hours nights and then have four days off duty though finishing at 09:00 on the first day off duty. This system operates over an 8 day period and averages 42 hours per week.
- 2.9 In establishing whether Bromsgrove is suitable for transition from the Wholetime Duty System to an alternative crewing status, research has been undertaken to determine whether the Station incident rate supports this proposal. Research has shown through those Services using alternative Day Crewing plus style crewing systems that the ceiling figure enabling realistic application of these systems is approximately **900** mobilisations per annum within the Station's cover area. Bromsgrove falls well within this category, whether currently or at previous (2006) call rate levels.
- 2.10 Consideration is also given to the number of incidents that occur after midnight. This relates to the impact that sustained night-time call rates play in the fatigue levels of firefighters over a crewing period of up to four days and also the potential impacts to following day routines and commitments.
- 2.11 The current status of alternative duty systems is that they do not comply with NJC Schemes and Conditions of Service for the Fire and Rescue Service; however both systems have been implemented successfully in a number of other Services. Feedback from these Services indicates that the duty systems are operationally efficient, very cost effective and "fit for purpose". Representative Bodies continue to be generally opposed to these types of systems, predominantly it would appear, due there being the need to employ less firefighters and that the systems is not in the NJC conditions of service, "grey" book.
- 2.12 The outcome of this review proposes the use of a bespoke self rostering system similar to the Day Crewing Plus (DCP) model. DCP has been identified as a preferable option for HWFRS, as it offers a cost effective solution to providing an equivalent service to that currently seen at Bromsgrove but with a minimum 50% staffing reduction. It also affords staff the opportunity to enhance their pay with a remuneration package that reflects their commitment to the system and it is clear that property requirements / modifications to facilitate the implementation of this model are less onerous when compared to other systems currently employed nationally.
- 2.13 Bromsgrove was formally a Day Crewing Station and was upgraded to Wholetime status in 1995. This occurred after a fire cover review of the Station area.

Option A2	Bromsgrove Wholetime Change to self rostering system equivalent to Day-Crewing Plus (DCP)
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- 2.14 *A system that provides a 24/7 service equivalent to current levels by utilising up to 14 staff on a flexible rota. The DCP system allows staff to develop a flexible rota that satisfies a system criterion whereby staff will be required to work 151 shifts per year (182 shifts prior to leave allocation). An agreed suitable rostering or shift system would avoid any prolonged periods on duty, as actual shifts worked will equate to less than 50% of the days in any given year. Accommodation for this system is provided on Station, meaning that response times are equivalent to current arrangements.*
- 2.15 The Day Crewing Plus (DCP) system represents a viable alternative to the traditional duty systems but only in circumstances where operational activity levels are relatively low, especially at night.
- 2.16 The general features of the DCP system can be summarised as follows:
- Provides an immediate 24/7 response capability using a Wholetime staffing model. This system is equivalent to the current system at Bromsgrove so its introduction will not affect response arrangements or impact our communities.
 - Requires 50% fewer staff to operate (when compared to the standard Wholetime shift duty system).
 - Requires staff to normally attend for shift periods of 24 hours at a time with the actual shift being split into 12 hours “at work” and 12 hours “on stand-by” (Rest) on Station.
 - Pays an additional salary premium to staff that volunteer to work the duty system and operates on a self-rostering or agreed shift pattern (such as 4 on - 4 off) to normally provide 5 crew members on the Wholetime crewed fire appliance.
 - Each member of staff works 151 shifts per year (after leave allocation) and each shift will be 24 hours long. This system in principle follows some of the criteria currently outlined within NJC Grey Book and will be helpful in negotiating its introduction.
 - May require a one-off capital investment at each Station where it will operate to facilitate enhanced living accommodation for staff to reside in during stand-by periods.
 - This system does not rely on staff living within a catchment area as is the case with a traditional Day-Crewing system.
 - When compared to the traditional crewing systems, it is up to **£415K*** per annum cheaper to run based on a 20% enhancement as calculated by HWFRS. (*proposed approximate figure)
- 2.17 It should be acknowledged that the DCP duty system does not comply with working pattern requirements as stipulated in the National Joint Council Schemes and Conditions of Service and as such staff cannot be required to work it. Therefore in

order to implement this system, the Service will be dependent on staff volunteering to transfer from an existing duty system.

- 2.18 It should be noted that for those Services that have introduced this system, the number of staff who have volunteered for this system has usually outnumbered the number of vacancies available. Staff who volunteer for the system will be required to opt out of the maximum average 48 hour working week, set out in the Working Time Regulations. This opt out is required purely because of the “stand by” on call hours are carried out at the work location and not because any member of staff is expected to work more than an average of 42 hours per week.

Impact on the Community

- 2.19 There is no impact on the community as the DCP system provides the same immediate response capability as the current four-shift Wholetime system at Bromsgrove.

Financial Overview – the figures are based on 14 personnel with an enhancement of 20%.

Description of Cost	Amount
Current system	£1,074,473
DCP fixed costs	- £659,473
Variable Costs	- £0
Total Savings	£415,000

- 2.20 This duty system type delivers significant year on year savings, at up to **£415k** per annum.
- 2.21 In recognising the additional commitment which the duty system involves, staff would receive a DCP allowance. This allowance is not fixed and Services have discretion; however a basic allowance which would be uplifted with any increases in basic salary is recommended. A figure of 20% has been utilised in this report.
- 2.22 To facilitate the new system, there will need to be adequate Station based facilities. The new build proposal for Bromsgrove Station has potential to be adapted to suit the requirements of this system, thus minimising potential costs.

Operational Benefits

- 2.23 Adopting the DCP duty system will allow existing response times to be maintained.

Conclusions

- 2.24 The Day-Crewing Plus system presents HWFRS with a viable alternative shift arrangement that will deliver the same service to the community as that presently delivered at Bromsgrove. It will also realise significant financial savings.
- 2.25 The proposed new Station for Bromsgrove will feature vastly improved welfare facilities, with very flexible options to support individuals working at that location on any type of shift pattern.

- 2.26 Other FRSs have set a precedent and there are not believed to be any significant barriers to implementation. The practical working of the system can be managed effectively to reduce any perceived risks associated with working long shifts with the inclusion of recovery periods or “stand down” time.

3. PART B

Options for Change - Requirement of a third appliance at Hereford, Worcester and Redditch

Option B1	Removal of the third appliance from Hereford
Option B2	Removal of the third appliance from Worcester
Option B3	Removal of the third appliance from Redditch
Option B4	Consider alternative crewing options

Context

- 3.1 When reviewing the requirement of a third appliance at Hereford, Worcester and Redditch, it is established that the three Retained appliances at these Stations constitute 7% of the current fleet provision. This is worthy of note when considered against Service operational resilience requirements. To provide 7% of the overall Fleet provision for an estimated salary cost of approximately £120k offers exceedingly good value for money.

Strategic Cover

- 3.2 Hereford and Worcester Stations are classed as strategic cover Stations, whereas Redditch is not. Strategic cover moves are carried out if it is considered that “strategic cover Stations” will be devoid of cover due to the potential for further incidents, for 30 minutes or more. Devoid of cover is defined as “all pumping appliances being committed or unavailable” from a particular Station area. It is noted that Redditch appliances may provide strategic cover to Bromsgrove, which is classed as a strategic cover Station.

Option B1	Removal of the Third Appliance from Hereford
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Hereford

- 3.3 The city of Hereford is the largest settlement within the county of Herefordshire and has a population of 55,800, close to one-third of the total 179,300 residents across the county area.
- 3.4 Hereford Station ground covers an area of approximately 101 square miles. The Station ground is located in the centre of the county and has fewer than 1,000 incidents a year, approximately 11% of all Service operational activity.

- 3.5 The Station has three appliances (two Wholetime appliances and one Retained), and a range of specialist appliances. Predominantly the Wholetime staff at Hereford provide the crewing for these special appliances, which deploy across the whole county and into Worcestershire. The RDS provide residual fire cover during these deployments and support the crewing of some special appliances.

Station Call Profile

Fig 6. All mobilisations by Hereford Station appliances within Hereford Station Area

Incident Type	2008	2009	2010
False Alarms	605	625	705
Primary Fire	243	296	271
RTC	75	110	79
Secondary Fire	163	156	127
Special Service	120	132	170
Chimney Fire	48	38	38
Total Mobilisations	1254	1357	1390

- 3.6 Fig 7 shows how activity for the Retained 463 has increased year on year from 2008-2010.

Fig 7. Mobilisation by appliance call sign

Call Sign	2008	2009	2010
461 (WT)	770	858	801
462 (WT)	388	381	443
463 (RDS)	96	118	146
Total mobilisations	1254	1357	1390

Financial Considerations

Fig 8. Removal of Retained appliance 463

Description of Cost	Amount
Current system (3 appliances)	£2,161,614
Reduce to 2 Wholetime appliances only plus fixed costs	- £2,113,215
Variable Costs	+ £2,234
Total Savings	£50,633

- 3.7 The cost saving of removing appliance 463 from Hereford Station in relation to annual staffing costs is approximately £50,633. This figure equates to 2.5% of the overall staffing costs at Hereford. Incidentally, the cost saving of removing any Wholetime appliance equates to nearly £1 million.

Operational Considerations

- 3.8 There appear to be limited operational considerations in removing the third appliance at Hereford beyond the advantages of releasing an appliance from the fleet.
- 3.9 Other than Hereford Station which is Wholetime staffed, the County relies exclusively on RDS support to provide fire cover for rest of the community of Herefordshire.
- 3.10 Removal of a third appliance at Hereford would see the loss of some specialist skills (ALP, guideline laying and water rescue) and the added value that these contribute to HWFRS.

Conclusion

- 3.11 When viewing the available data it can be seen that from a performance perspective alone the loss of appliance 463 will have a minimal performance impact on the Station. When considering these options against the wider operational resilience provided by the RDS, the removal of a third appliance from Hereford would have an impact.
- 3.12 In summary, to lose approximately 33% of the station's frontline firefighting capability to save 2.5% of the station's salaries budget would not seem to offer a significant saving compared to the loss of strategic cover and skills.

Option B2 Removal of the Third Appliance from Worcester

Worcester

- 3.13 Worcester is the largest city within the county of Worcestershire and has a total population of 94,800 which has grown from 93,400 in 2001 and these occupy about 41,000 households.
- 3.14 Worcester Station ground covers an area of approximately 84.94 square miles. The Station ground is located in the centre of the county where approximately 1,350 incidents occur a year, approximately 14% of all Service operational activity.
- 3.15 Worcester Station has three appliances, two Wholetime and one Retained, and a range of specialist appliances. Predominantly the Wholetime firefighters at Worcester Station provide crewing for these special appliances for the Service, but when required for incidents the RDS crew provide residual fire cover during these deployments and also provide support for some special appliances.
- 3.16 As a key location, Worcester will be subject to cover moves should both Wholetime appliances be employed on operational incidents beyond 30 minutes. The third (Retained) appliance is utilised for this purpose in the hours between 0800–0930 hrs and 1600–1800 hrs although requirement is of low frequency.

Station Call Profile

Fig 9. All mobilisations by Worcester Station appliances within Worcester Station Area

Incident Type	2008	2009	2010
False Alarms	944	968	1236
Primary Fire	375	358	302
RTC	144	121	138
Secondary Fire	194	188	183
Special Service	250	226	278
Chimney Fire	9	19	46
Total Mobilisations	1916	1880	2183

- 3.17 Fig 10 below demonstrates how calls have risen from 2008 to 2010 for all appliances, with a 25% increase for 213.

Fig 10. Mobilisation by appliance call sign

Call Sign	2008	2009	2010
211 (WT)	1136	1148	1309
212 (WT)	573	531	615
213 (RDS)	207	201	259
Total Mobilisations	1916	1880	2183

Financial Considerations

Fig 11. Removal of Retained appliance 213

Description of Cost	Amount
Current system (3 appliances)	£2,152,220
2 Wholetime appliances fixed costs	- £2,113,215
Variable Costs	+ £11,916
Total Savings	£50,921

- 3.18 The cost saving of removing appliance 213 from Worcester in terms of annual staff costs is £50,921 which equates to 2.5% of overall station's staff costs. The removal of either Wholetime appliance would result in a saving of just under £1 million. Cost considerations include the increased variable costs of additional workloads for Droitwich and Malvern, which increase by 10% and 7% respectively.

Operational Considerations

- 3.19 There appear to be limited operational considerations to removing the third appliance at Worcester beyond the financial advantages of releasing an appliance from the fleet.
- 3.20 Removal of a third appliance from Worcester Station will see the loss of specialist skills, (ALP, guideline laying and water rescue).

Conclusion

- 3.21 When viewing the available data it is seen that from a performance perspective, the loss of appliance 213 has minimal performance impact on the Station.
- 3.22 When considering these options against the wider operational resilience provided by the RDS, the removal of a third appliance from Worcester would have some impact.
- 3.23 In summary, to lose approximately 33% of the station's frontline firefighting capability to save 2.5% of the station's salaries budget would not seem to offer a significant saving compared to the loss of strategic cover and skills.

Option B3 Removal of the Third Appliance from Redditch

Redditch

- 3.24 Redditch is one of the largest towns within Worcestershire and has a total population of 78,700 which has fallen from 78,800 in 2001 and these occupy about 35,000 households.

- 3.25 Redditch Station ground covers an area of approximately 65.64 square miles. The Station ground is located to the northeast of the county where approximately 1,170 incidents take place a year, approximately 12% of all Service operational activity. The Station ground is bordered by Bromsgrove to the northwest, Droitwich to the west and receives support from appliances from the West Midlands Fire Service and from Alcester, Warwickshire FRS.
- 3.26 Redditch Station has three appliances – one Wholetime and two Retained.

Stations Call Profile

Fig 12. All mobilisations by Redditch Station appliances within Redditch Station Area

Incident Type	2008	2009	2010
False Alarms	631	706	650
Primary Fire	310	284	304
RTC	116	129	110
Secondary Fire	212	187	184
Special Service	135	112	130
Chimney Fire	16	11	21
Total Mobilisations	1420	1429	1399

- 3.27 Fig 13 shows how activity has been fairly static over the past three years, with a small drop in activity from 2009-2010. However, the third RDS appliance (273) has increased activity by 33%. Combining the two Retained appliances, their activity has dropped overall by 5%.

Fig 13. Mobilisations by call sign

Call Sign	2008	2009	2010	Total Mobilisations
271 (RDS)	314	283	266	863
272 (WT)	1020	1054	1018	3092
273 (RDS)	86	92	115	293
Total Mobilisations	1420	1429	1399	4248

Financial Overview

Fig 14. Removal of Retained appliance 273

Description of Cost	Amount
Current system (3 appliances)	£1,126,342
1 Wholetime appliance and 1 RDS appliance fixed costs	-£1,113,477
Variable Costs	+£7,324
Total Savings	£20,189

- 3.28 The cost saving for removing a Retained appliance at Redditch is less than that of removing the Retained appliances from Worcester or Hereford. Proportionate to overall financial costs at Redditch, removal of any RDS appliance equates to 2.5% of overall staffing costs.
- 3.29 The removal of one RDS appliance would result in the reduction of 4 posts at Redditch as opposed to 12 at Worcester and 15 at Hereford, due to current RDS establishments. The removal of the Wholetime appliance cost saving is approximately the same as for Hereford and Worcester (see Appendix 5, Crewing for Calculating Financials for more information).

Operational Considerations

- 3.30 There are limited operational considerations to removing the third appliance from Redditch.
- 3.31 The potential impact on 13/16 attendances needs to be taken into consideration in relation to Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service's closure of Studley Station and West Midlands Fire Service proposals to increase the cost of support into HWFRS Service areas.

Conclusion

- 3.32 When viewing the available data, it is seen that from a performance perspective the loss of appliance 273 has minimal performance impact on the Station.
- 3.33 When considering these options against the wider operational resilience provided by the RDS, the removal of a third appliance from Redditch will have some impact.
- 3.34 In summation to lose approximately 33% of the station's frontline firefighting capability to save 2.5% of the station's salaries budget would not seem to offer a significant saving relative to the loss of strategic cover and skills.

Option B4	Further Consider Alternative Crewing Options
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- 3.35 Currently Redditch provides a cost efficient solution to providing three appliance level fire cover when compared to Hereford and Worcester. Further consideration of reviewing the Wholetime crewing arrangements at Hereford and Worcester offers the possibility of significant efficiencies with minimal change to the service to the communities. As an example; the second appliances at Hereford and Worcester could be crewed by Retained staff, such as the model that is used successfully at Redditch. This would potentially offer up to £700k (estimate) savings per Station.
- 3.36 Based upon the remaining levels of crewing from this review, it can be seen that the Service currently aspires to crew all Wholetime first appliances with a crew of five (four on the second appliance at Hereford and Worcester). However a crew of four is acceptable and can safely respond to all types of incident. Where necessary, to crew all Wholetime appliances with four Wholetime staff would reduce costs on the Resilience Register when crewing is depleted, for example due to sickness. Prior to the inception of the Resilience Register in 2008, it was commonplace for Wholetime appliances to regularly crew with four, when establishment levels were low, when training events were planned or when sickness levels were high.
- 3.37 Initial research shows that in 2010 Hereford and Worcester Stations responded as an initial combined two pump attendance to 189 primary fires in their own Station areas. The average time difference of arrival between the first and second appliance was 1 minute and 14 seconds. It can therefore be proposed that at Hereford and Worcester station under normal circumstances could crew with four personnel on each appliance, as they support each other so quickly, in most cases. In order to give this context, the 19 stand alone RDS Stations may often respond with one appliance and crew of four, dependant on the availability of RDS staff with a far greater time delay than 1 minute and 14 seconds for the next supporting appliance to arrive.

- 3.38 HWFRS has seen the innovative temporary use of alternate crewing types in its recent history. In looking at the options for the development of second pump alternate crewing types throughout the Service, indicative costs have been identified for a number of alternate crewing options.
- 3.39 There are several Fire and Rescue Services currently looking at positive crewing models where the Service responds to peak staffing demands presented on the day or night where they can be reasonably pre-planned.

PART C

4. The Appropriate Number of Personnel on Each Watch at Wholetime and Day Crewed Stations

Option C2	Reduce Hereford and Worcester shift establishment from 14 to 12.5 and Droitwich, Evesham and Malvern establishments from 8 to 7
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Context

- 4.1 Before considering each Option for Change separately the following findings should be noted:

- The current Service establishment figure is no longer fit for purpose and is seen to be excessive when compared to other Services of comparable size.
- It is desirable to operate crewing levels at 5 or 5/4, (5/4 equates to 5 on the first and 4 on the second at two appliance stations); however the Service can operate at minimum crewing of 4 or 4/4. This flexibility builds additional resilience of 8 staff into every day shift into both the current and any proposed system.
- The revised annual leave policy will assist in smoothing impacts to the establishment figures.
- A new approach to operational training delivery as part of the IRMP 2011/12 action plan will support any proposed new establishment figures with more locally delivered training with appliances remaining available for calls, instead of centralised training where spare capacity is used.
- Sickness and modified duties is effectively managed and relatively low on average.
- Unplanned absence is underpinned by the use of the Resilience Register and may be utilised to minimise any unplanned absence impacts to the Service. The current methodology of employing extra full-time staff for this purpose is not an efficient or sustainable model.

Fig 15. Current establishment figure

Station	Establishment per Watch	Total staff for Days	Total staff for Nights
Kidderminster, Bromsgrove and Redditch	3 x 7	21	21
Droitwich, Evesham, Malvern	3 x 8	24	On call
Hereford and Worcester	2 x 14	28	28
Total		73	49

- 4.2 Note: it should be noted that all calculations are based on standard ridership of 5 per appliance; however an additional 8 staff remain as resilience whereby appliances may ride with 4 at any time.

Fig 16. Crewing Levels Required

	DAYS	NIGHTS
Kidderminster, Bromsgrove and Redditch	15	15
Droitwich*, Evesham*, Malvern*	15	On call
Hereford and Worcester	18	18
Standard crewing level	48	33
Minimum Crewing level	40	28

*On call between 1800hrs and 0800hrs

- **Standard** crewing, equivalent to 5 staff on each first appliance at Wholetime Stations. At Hereford and Worcester this means 5 on the first appliance and 4 on the second, giving a total of 9.
- **Minimum** crewing ridership equates to 4 staff on each first appliance at Wholetime Stations. At Hereford and Worcester this would mean 4 on the first and 4 on the second, giving a total of 8.
- When added together it is seen that HWFRS currently provides both a standard and minimum crewing figure of 48 or 40 staff respectively to provide its operational response on a day shift basis.
- **Available capacity:** This is the difference between the establishment figure employed by the Service of 73 in the day and 49 at night, and the standard crewing figure required to staff appliances to 5/4 of 48 in the day and 33 at night. This can be seen in Fig 17 below – available capacity for each days shift is up to 25 and 16 for nights.

Fig 17. Available capacity

	DAYS	NIGHTS
Total Establishment	73	49
<i>Deduct the amount needed for crewing</i>		
Standard crewing figure	48	33
Available capacity	25	16
<i>Note: based upon minimum figures crewing 4 gives greater capacity</i>	33	21

How Available Capacity is Utilised

- 4.3 In establishing that the Service has an available capacity for both standard and minimum crewing levels, consideration needs to be given as to what factors can impact on these figures. Available capacity can be currently defined as the staffing complement required to cover planned and/or unplanned activities.
- **Planned** – forecasted absence such as annual leave and training delivery. Planned leave is centrally planned and locally co-ordinated and aims to minimise impacts on establishment figures.

- **Unplanned** – sickness and modified duties, parental leave, watch changes, temporary staff promotions and other leave types which cannot be forecast and that impact on the Service's residual capacity.

- 4.4 In considering the Service's historical absence data alone it can be seen that the Service has spare capacity. This spare capacity could then lower the Service's required establishment figure. This revised figure can be lowered again when introducing the Service's voluntary crewing mechanism - the Resilience Register (RR) – for example, for unplanned absences (see Fig. 18 below).
- 4.5 Operating costs for the RR fluctuate month on month. The Service may need to consider budgeting up to an additional £50,000 per annum to cover RR usage, with these proposed changes. This figure has been used within this report as an indicative figure to offset against financial savings realised from post reductions. Further development of the use of the RR would involve a review of current arrangements and the development of cost effective methods of securing the services of staff to fit this proposal.
- 4.6 Paying for staff when required to backfill for unplanned absences is significantly more cost effective than employing excess staff on a full-time basis.

Fig 18. Effect of reduced posts on leave allocation and basic establishment figure and spare capacity

Post reduction Option C2	Leave slots	No of leave groups	Staff on leave per shift	Standard crewing	Standard crewing + leave	Establishment figure	Spare capacity (excluding training & other leave etc)
Reduce to 12.5 and 7 Day Shift	574	46	12.50	48	60.5	67	6.5
Reduce to 12.5 and 7 Night Shift	394	46	8.60	33	39.6	46	6.4

- 4.7 The Service considers the competence of its staff to be of the highest importance and to that end has invested heavily in areas that secure the competence of its employees. The traditional methodology for delivering training within HWFRS and other Fire and Rescue Services has been to centralise the training approach with staff travelling individually to central venues. This approach when used excessively or out of necessity impacts significantly on crewing establishment figures.
- 4.8 During 2011 the Service has undertaken a training review. This review determined that a change in delivery methods will occur. A revised training approach will concentrate on crew based training, with appliances travelling to training venues as a collective and providing operational cover if required from that venue. There will still be limited occasions where individuals will have to attend a central training delivery but this will be the exception. Implementation of the training review will then add further staff capacity into the system.

Operational Considerations

- 4.9 There are no operational considerations as to why this staffing figure cannot be applied. The collective reduction in staffing numbers will require the careful management of day-to-day staffing levels and the effective planning of leave, but it will benefit significantly from the positive impacts of the training review and the additional staffing capacity that this will provide.

Financial Overview

- 4.10 Cost savings in relation to this option equate to £682,464
- 4.11 Continued usage of the RR may impact on cost savings against this proposal. It is envisaged that an additional £50,000 to the current budget may be required to consolidate this proposal. It is considered, however, that with the introduction of management efficiencies as previously highlighted, this additional allocation may not be needed.

Fig 19.

Station	Post Reductions	Financial Savings
Hereford and Worcester	12	£435,192
Droitwich, Evesham, Malvern	6	£247,272
Total	18	£682,464

Conclusion

- 4.12 When reviewing all available data and considering staff concerns, it is determined that a reduction of establishment at Day Crewed Stations from 8 to 7 and a reduction of establishment at Hereford and Worcester from 14 to 12.5 is a viable option. This would realise a reduction of 18 posts – (1.5 x 8 shifts at Hereford and Worcester, and 1 x 6 shifts at Droitwich, Evesham and Malvern).
- 4.13 There are no operational considerations that would prohibit its successful implementation.
- 4.14 Financial savings potentially equate to **£682, 000.**

Recommendation 4: Consultation Programme

1. Background

This report highlights the proposed consultation programme for Recommendation 4 which states: *‘we will review our fire cover and response arrangements’*. Recommendation 4 reviewed the following:

1. The current crewing arrangements at Bromsgrove.
2. The requirement of a third Appliance at Hereford, Worcester and Redditch.
3. The appropriate number of personnel on each watch at Wholetime and Day Crewed stations.

In considering the three elements above, there are a proposed a range of options for change. In compiling Recommendation 4 key objectives were:

1. To deliver a range of proposals that are balanced and proportionate.
2. To deliver a range of options that would not compromise operational standards or safety.

Proposals within Recommendation 4 will primarily only affect internal stakeholders, based upon this the consultation audience is internal staff.

2. Objectives of our consultation

In line with the principles of consultation based upon proportionality it is proposed that the duration of the consultation programme will be 8 weeks. The programme will begin on March 8th 2012 and conclude on May 4th 2012.

This duration and programme has been determined by the following:

1. Extensive information gathering exercises have already been conducted with affected stakeholders prior to and during the formulation of the Recommendation 4 review.
2. The relevant information will be published and direct contact will be programmed for those groups affected in order to document their feedback. (See Consultation Programme of Visits).
3. Whilst partners and other interested groups will be consulted, a wider program of broad public consultation is not proposed as the outcomes of this review do not change the provision of service to the community, in either response times or numbers of fire appliances.

Our consultation objectives are:

- To offer the opportunity to those most affected to share their views regarding the recommendations proposed and to offer the opportunity for discussion.
- To listen and record both positive views and concerns, as well as understand how the impact of these changes is perceived.
- To provide the facts and context to the proposed changes.

3. How we will engage

The table below outlines our engagement strategy for all groups. The intent is to make the consultation effective by creating environments where views can be expressed. A summary of our target groups can be seen below.

(A more detailed overview can be found within the Consultation Programme of Visits)

Group	Method of engagement
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visits to all affected stations.• Attendance at command and managerial forums and meetings• Attendance at RDS forums• Provide access to key staff for discussions and “round table” meetings where necessary.
Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promulgation through media to highlight proposals as it is likely that these will be reported post Committee and publishing on information on website.
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Statutory partners will be made aware of our proposals through existing networks.
Representative Bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A full programme of engagement will be conducted with representative bodies regarding these proposals.
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proactive engagement with media (See below)

4. Media coverage

It is envisaged that there may be some media interest regarding these proposals. The Service will focus on three key messages in this consultation exercise, which are:

1. No changes to the existing provision of fire cover to the public
2. Reduced cost to the public purse
3. No redundancies as a result of these changes

The purpose of proactive engagement with the media is to ensure the facts are presented and information is available to those who are concerned. By adopting this strategy the Service can assist by presenting the facts.

A full consultation programme has been planned and is available for Members on request.