

Report of the Area Commander (Operations Support)

8. Disposal of Aerial Appliances

Purpose of report

1. To inform the Policy and Resources Committee of the outcomes of the Aerial Appliance Review (Appendix 1) and seek agreement for recommendations.
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Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- (i) the aerial appliance be removed from Bromsgrove and the Service instead maintains two aerial appliances – at Hereford and Worcester;***
- (ii) the surplus hydraulic platform and CARP be disposed of in the most appropriate way with a view to realising the best return.***

Background

2. Historically HWFRS has provided aerial appliances across the two counties for use at a variety of incidents. Traditionally, they were provided as a means of fighting fires from height and for rescuing casualties from fires in buildings with floors above the reach of ladders carried on frontline pumping appliances (four or more floors). However, with the decline in accidental dwelling fires and the introduction of the Working at Height Regulations in 2005 aerial appliances are now more often used for firefighter safety, observation platforms or as a method of delivering large volumes of water over a fire (water tower).
3. Since 1995 HWFRS has provided three aerial appliances located at Bromsgrove, Hereford and Worcester. The appliances at Hereford and Worcester are Aerial Ladder Platforms (ALP) and are identical. The appliance at Bromsgrove is a Hydraulic Platform (HP) and was intended to be replaced with a Combined Aerial Rescue Pump (CARP). However, due to significant technical issues with the CARP it has never been operational within the Service and consequently the HP has not yet been removed from service.

Findings

4. Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service has a need for an aerial appliance capability due to the number and type of incidents and risks attended and this is currently provided through three appliances based at Bromsgrove, Hereford and Worcester.

5. The Hydraulic Platform (HP) at Bromsgrove is at the end of its operational life and was due to be replaced by the Combined Aerial Rescue Pump (CARP). The CARP has never been operational due to technical issues and the HP still remains in service but cannot be accommodated at the new station in Bromsgrove.
6. HP and CARP offer no specific capability over and above that provided by ALP.
7. Statistical evidence shows there is no need to maintain three aerial appliances within the Service and that the appliances are not used to perform rescues from fires. Risk information held by HWFRS has been reviewed and also shows there is no need to maintain three aerial appliances.
8. As the HP and CARP are different from the Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP), they and the crews are not interchangeable giving significant logistical issues at protracted incidents and in maintaining appliance availability.
9. The incident data examined by this review shows that aerial appliances are not used to save life from fire and anecdotal evidence indicates that they are used as water towers, observation platforms and for providing a safe platform for firefighters working at height.

Conclusions

10. Based upon analysis of incident data and risk information, HWFRS has a need to use an aerial appliance capability at incidents however the evidence does not support the need to maintain three aerial appliances within the two counties.
11. The aerial appliance at Bromsgrove (currently HP) is very rarely mobilised and when it does attend incidents, it is seldom used.
12. This report therefore recommends the removal of the aerial appliance from Bromsgrove and the maintenance of the two ALPs at Hereford and Worcester. This will mean that it will take approximately 30 minutes for an aerial appliance to arrive into the Bromsgrove/Redditch area which is approximately the same time for an aerial appliance to arrive in the majority of areas within the two counties.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	Financial implications – sale of aerial
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	No
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	None
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Yes; FBU Officer Branch and FOA required
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	N/A

Supporting Information

Appendix 1: HWFRS Aerial Appliance Review December 2013

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