

Draft corporate objectives 2010 to 2013

New risk based response standards

What and why?

We want to get to different types of incidents in reasonable times and with the right resources (number of firefighters, vehicles and equipment). After reviewing the various risks and incidents we deal with, we have set 'speed-of-response' times for them. We have put these in three categories.

- 'Life-threatening and other critical incidents' – to arrive in 8 minutes
- 'Non-critical incidents' – to arrive in 15 minutes
- 'Other incidents' – to arrive in 60 minutes

By using these response standards we will be able to send our resources more quickly to incidents that are life-threatening and to those that may damage property.

How and when?

We will check that we are achieving these new response standards by using local performance indicators (standards we measure our performance against). We will aim to make yearly improvements in our performance, so by April 2013 we aim to respond to 80% of all life-threatening and other critical incidents in eight minutes.

We will introduce these new response standards from April 2010.

[Contributing to our priorities for: resources]

Making best use of our firefighters

What and why?

At certain times of the day we can make better use of our full-time firefighters. Each day we will put up to three fire engines and their crews of firefighters on 'second-line availability'. This means that the firefighters will be able to carry out more training and important safety work in local communities. If needed, the fire engines and crews will be able to return to front-line duties within one hour.

In Portsmouth, each day we will use firefighters from one of the fire engines on 'second-line availability' to crew a 'small fires' vehicle and to work on the mobile community contact point (a specially designed vehicle we use to improve the contact we have with people in all areas of the county).

How and when?

We will start by putting up to any three fire engines from across the county on 'second-line availability' from April 2010.

[Contributing to our priorities for: resources]

Tackling small fires in a better way

What and why?

Most small fires are started deliberately and they are the most frequent type of fire we have to deal with. We will introduce special teams to prevent and deal with these non-critical incidents. This will mean that our usual front-line fire engines and crews will be immediately available to tackle life-threatening and other critical incidents.

It will also mean training and community-safety activities are less likely to be disrupted.

How and when?

We will learn from the experience we have from our 'first-response vehicle', and also from other fire and rescue services. This will allow us to introduce a small-fires vehicle to work across Southampton from April 2010. We will then introduce small-fires vehicles in Basingstoke and Portsmouth in 2011.

In Southampton and Basingstoke the small fires vehicles will work 24 hours a day. They will be crewed jointly with the aerial ladder platform. In Portsmouth, this team will come from second-line availability each day and will be crewed at times when most small fires occur.

[Contributing to our priorities for: people, property, environment, community, resources]

Increasing our contact with the public

What and why?

We want to reduce the risk of fires and other emergencies in our communities. We will work with our partners, and use our 'mobile community contact point' to improve access to, and contact with, people in all areas of the county.

How and when?

Our first mobile community contact point will be used in Portsmouth. We will learn from its success before buying any more mobile community contact points and, if we do buy more, we will buy them and staff them in partnership with others.

[Contributing to our priorities for: people, property, environment, community]

Creating a dedicated fire investigation service

What and why?

Investigating fires is an important part of our work. It is important that we correctly identify the causes of fire. If we suspect arson, we need to examine and record evidence to help prosecute those responsible. We want to improve our expertise on investigating fires, but also deliver this service in a more efficient way. We will work with other fire and rescue services in the South East to set up a dedicated team to provide a fire-investigation service. The more fire and rescue services that join this initiative, the better our results will be.

How and when?

We have a dedicated team of staff who will go to incidents where we need to investigate the cause of a fire. We will work with other fire and rescue services in the South East to expand the team to provide this service over a wider area.

We will set up the dedicated team within Hampshire by June 2010 and expand it to other South East fire and rescue services in line with their needs.

[Contributing to our priorities for: community, resources]

Reviewing staff numbers**What and why?**

We know that public funding will be under severe pressure over the next three years. So, we want to be sure that we employ the right number of staff to deliver our services efficiently.

We will review the numbers of staff in all areas of our service. The review will examine all front-line and support staff at fire stations and headquarters.

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

How and when?

Following on from the review of our directors' responsibilities, we will examine our headquarters' departments, and other staff not based at fire stations, to make sure they are working efficiently and with the right numbers. We will start this work in April 2010 and report what we find to the Service Management Team in October 2010.

The efficient and flexible crewing project, which we introduced in last year's plan, allows us to use fewer firefighters at full-time fire stations. From April 2010 we will stop recruiting full-time firefighters until we reach the right staffing numbers at fire stations.

Using information we get from our retained management system, we will develop more suitable employment contracts for our firefighters. This may include introducing a salary scheme. This will mean we have more control over how many retained (on-call) firefighters we need. We will introduce this by February 2011.

[Contributing to our priorities for: resources]