

REPORT TO:	MERSEYSIDE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
DATE:	11TH OCTOBER, 2005
REPORT NO.	CFO/219/05
REPORTING OFFICER:	CHIEF FIRE OFFICER
CONTACT OFFICER:	ACFO EVANS
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM
SUBJECT:	SENIOR OFFICER PROVISION FOR INCIDENT COMMAND

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to inform members of the 'Analysis of Senior Officer Provision for Incident Command Purposes', and to seek approval for implementation of the reports recommendations.

Recommendations

2. This report recommends that members:
 - Approve Appendix A and underpinning document 'Senior Officer Provision for Incident Command Purposes' for consultation with Representative Bodies.
 - request the CFO to report back the outcomes of consultation to the Authority for further consideration.

Background

3. The report 'Analysis of Senior Officer Provision for Incident Command Purposes' should be read in conjunction with reports appertaining to Locality Managers and the associated extension of this scheme.

Legislative requirements

4. The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 places a duty on the Fire Authority to secure the provision of the personnel, services and equipment necessary to efficiently meet all normal requirements for firefighting and rescuing people from road traffic collisions.

5. As a result the IRMP 2 supplement states the intention to conduct an analysis of both the number of senior officers required to provide operational cover at emergency incidents, and the flexible duty system utilised to ensure that sufficient officers are available to attend all reasonably foreseeable incidents (IRMP 2 Action Point 2.14).

The Incident Command System (ICS)

6. The Fire Service Manual 'Incident Command' details the Incident Command System (ICS) which is Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS) compliant and broadly accepted and in use by Fire and Rescue Services throughout the UK.
7. The attached analysis pays due regard to the ICS and the number of senior officers required to effectively manage its implementation on the incident ground within MFRS.

Current Staffing Arrangements

8. MFRS currently maintain 10 senior officers on operational cover duty at any one time, provided for as follows:

Table 1: Current Senior Officer Operational Cover Provision

Principal Officer (Brigade Manager)	1
Senior Divisional Officer (Area Manager)	1
Divisional Officer (Group manager)	3
Assistant Divisional Officer (Station Manager)	5
Total	10

9. This current level of staffing is provided to meet the perceived requirement to maintain a 20 pump fire and a 20 pump chemical incident occurring simultaneously.
10. Simultaneous 20 pump incidents would certainly be beyond the normal requirements stipulated within the Fire and Rescue Services Act; indeed MFRS have never experienced simultaneous incidents of this magnitude.
11. Analysis of incident data from 1997 to the present produced the following key findings:
 - The greatest number of pumps deployed at any one time was 22 at 2 separate incidents (1 x 20 pumps and 1 x 2 pumps) which required the attendance of a total of 6 senior officers;
 - Only 3 incidents since 1997 have required the attendance of more than 8 senior officers (1 x 20 pumps, 1 x 10 pumps and 1 x 9 pumps);

- During the busiest year, more than 6 senior officers were required at only 1.9% of incidents.

Resilience Arrangements and Additional Command Support

12. MFRS have recently introduced a recall to duty system whereby officers can be recalled to duty in the event of a major incident or simultaneous smaller incidents.
13. There are currently 9 Divisional Officers and 20 Assistant Divisional Officers who have made themselves available for the recall to duty scheme.
14. This arrangement proved most effective in the recent out of area deployment to Carlisle where MFRS provided 5 senior officers over a 48-hour period.
15. MFRS also maintain 6 ADO District Liaison Officers (DLO) who do not provide operational cover but instead are available to provide out of hours advice on Legislative Fire Safety, and post incident investigative support.
16. In November 2004, MFRS introduced the Incident Management Team (IMT) to respond to incidents of 3 pumps and above to provide incident command support on a 24-hour availability.
17. The IMT have received specific and comprehensive training in the implementation of the ICS and provide incident command support to the attending senior officer at an incident and such is the effectiveness of the IMT they have removed the need to mobilise a senior officer to incidents of up to 7 pumps specifically to fulfil the command support role.
18. Further information on the performance of the IMT can be found in report CFO/138/05.

Proposed Staffing Arrangements

19. As a result of the analysis, the CFO recommends the following level of senior officer cover for reasonably foreseeable incidents;

Table 1: Proposed Senior Officer Operational Cover Provision

Brigade Manager	1
Area Manager	1
Group Manager	2
Station Manager	4
Total	8

20. The incident analysis and resilience arrangements detailed above prove that MFRS can efficiently meet all normal operational requirements for senior officer cover.

Equality & Diversity Implications

21. The recommendations of the Analysis for Senior Officer Provision for Incident Command Purposes does not have any Equality and Diversity implications, but will allow the creation of more Station Locality Manager posts which offer the potential to increase representation from under represented groups within the Authority's management.

Financial Implications

22. To meet the operational requirements detailed above the Service will require a Senior Officer provision of 12 Group Managers and 24 Station Managers against an existing budgeted provision of 14 Group Managers and 32 Station Managers.
23. This reduction in the requirement for operational posts will allow the movement to a more even balance between Station Managers and Locality Managers in the medium term (as set out in report CFO/203/05 elsewhere on the agenda). This will release significant net efficiency gains that will be brought in detail into the financial planning and budgeting process.
24. As part of preliminary negotiations about these proposals the CFO has been asked to consider extending the Authority's lease car arrangements to all senior officers in reflection of the greater operational response requirements upon those remaining officers. The CFO will consider this as part of the consultation process and report back in full on this issue at the close of consultation.