



Issue 1
November 2008

North West Fire and Rescue Management Board Newsletter



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Welcome to the first edition of the North West Fire and Rescue Management Board Newsletter. Every quarter we will inform you about developments and initiatives that are being delivered by the fire and rescue services in the region.

In our first edition we will provide you with information about;

- the role and make up of the management board,
- collaborative issues that have been delivered in the region
- progress on the Regional Fire Control project and
- Government Office for the North West and
- the North West Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (NWIEP)

North West Fire and Rescue Management Board (NWFRMB)

The NWFRMB was established in April 2004 following the publication of the White Paper 'Our Fire and Rescue Service' in 2003. In 2004 the government published the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework 2004/2005 which clearly laid out the role of Regional Management Boards (RMBs) which were to:

- integrate common and specialist services, e.g. fire investigation
- put in place effective resilience plans for large scale emergencies
- introduce regional personnel and human resource functions
- develop a regional approach to training
- establish regional control centres; and
- introduce regional procurement within the context of a national procurement strategy

There are currently nine RMBs in the UK, whose job it is to promote regional collaboration in the above key areas. Twenty Councillors from Cheshire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authorities have been nominated onto the NWFRMB on the following basis:

Greater Manchester	8
Lancashire	4
Merseyside	4
Cheshire	3
Cumbria	1

The Chairman of the Board is Councillor John Joyce from Cheshire Fire and Rescue Authority and the Vice Chairs are Councillor Fred Walker from Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority and Councillor Tony Newman from Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority.

The NWFRMB is advised and supported by the five chief fire officers in the region.

Councillor Joyce said "The focus of the NWFRMB's work is to seek ways in which the fire and rescue services in the North West can work together to achieve greater improvement and efficiency in the above key themes. To date we have delivered improvements in a number of areas but we recognise that there is more that we can achieve as a region. We do, however, wish to ensure that the delivery of front line services remains with the respective Fire and Rescue Authorities which continue to provide local services that meet the specific needs of the communities served".



Regional Progress

The FRSs in the region have been working together over the past 4 years to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the service and listed below are examples of initiatives that have been delivered to date.

1. Production of a regional specification and tender document for fire tunics and overtrousers.
2. Production of a regional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) maintenance contract.
3. Production of a regional call off contract for purchasing duty rig/working rig.
4. Production of a regional framework agreement for the purchase of shoes.
5. A regional agreement for the attendance at conferences and seminars.
6. A Memorandum of Understanding for Line Rescue.
7. Local delivery of Fire Service College fire safety modules at Lancashire or Greater Manchester Training Centres.
8. A regional approach to Fire Investigation.
9. The roll out of 6 High Volume Pumps and associated equipment across North West FRSs.
10. The full Detection, Identification and Monitoring capability is now on the run in Greater Manchester and Merseyside providing cover for the North West region.
11. The full suite of Urban Search and Rescue modules, 10 in total, has now been received into the North West region. These vehicles are located in Merseyside and Lancashire FRSs with support being provided by Cheshire and Greater Manchester FRSs to crew the vehicles.
12. The rollout of 8 Incident Response Units, 3 Mass Decontamination Disrobe Units and 1 Mass Decontamination Re-robe Unit.
13. A Memorandum of Understanding for Water Rescue
14. A stock of fire appliance pump parts has been established centrally to minimise down time of appliances and reduce individual FRS stock holding.
15. The establishment of a regional environmental protection group.
16. Merseyside and Lancashire have developed a partnership approach to procurement

Regional Fire Control

FiReControl is a government-led, nationally designed project that aims to provide improved resilience in the way the fire service handles 999 calls. It will do this by moving from the five individual fire control rooms in the North West – to one integrated regional control centre that will serve all fire services in the region. The RCC is programmed to cut-over to the national RCC network in late 2010 with the final FRSs transferring by mid 2011.

The North West Regional Control Centre is located at Lingley Mere, Warrington. It will be operated by a Local Authority Controlled Company - with the company title North West Fire Control Company. Dominic Whelan has been appointed as the Regional Control Centre Director to run the company.

The Company has been established for about 12 months and has commenced work on the development of the governance policies as well as key Operational and HR decisions to ensure a seamless move from the service delivered in our current control room to the RCC.

The RCC building is now complete and the Regional Project Team are aiming to move in before the end of the year. Each FRS has established their own project team and individual plans to effect a smooth transition with close working relationships enhancing this as both regional and local fire Service level. Additional information can be found at following website

www.communities.gov.uk

Government Office North West

The North West Fire and Rescue Management Board in collaboration with each of the North West Fire and Rescue Authorities, sponsor a secondment to the Regional Government Office. Currently this liaison role is undertaken by Adrian Luty from Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service.

Primarily the role works to engage and liaise with Regional, Sub-Regional, Local and Central Government bodies, across all areas of Policy, Delivery and Performance. Representing the Five Fire Authorities, a key feature of the work is to raise the Fire and Rescue profile at a strategic level, whilst ensuring Fire and Rescue planning and delivery is aligned to, and cohesive with the wider regional delivery network. The post also works closely with the North West Fire and Rescue Project Office and team and its role in building and delivering all North West collaborative work streams.

A key area of work during the last 12 months has been working with Service areas and Government Office leads to secure and negotiate Fire and Rescue indicators within the new Local Area Agreement (LAA) framework. Fire and Rescue has two new National Indicators within the National Performance Framework: NI 33 - All Deliberate Fires (Anti-Social Behaviour

Fires) and NI 49 - Number of primary fires and related fatalities and non-fatal casualties (ex precautionary checks). These indicators in terms of performance replace all of the existing Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI's), though these remain an option for monitoring local performance within each Service.

Across the North West which consists of 22 Local Area Agreement (Local Authority) areas, Fire and Rescue secured inclusion within a total of 15 Local Area Agreements as either Primary (9) or Local (6) targets. This is by a wide margin the best performance nationally across the nine English Regions.

Importantly this achievement is more about the excellent work in promoting the understanding and recognition of how Fire and Rescue and its preventative/operational work cross cuts the national, regional and local priorities of:

- Anti-Social Behaviour/crime
- Health and health inequalities especially around Age, Illness and Alcohol
- Young people – offending and lack of opportunity
- Social and economic deprivation including worklessness
- The environment and sustainability including climate change and its effects

The first refresh of LAA's is due to start this November, for completion by the 31 st march 2009. Government Office will be supporting a North West FRS LAA event as part of the NWF&R Innovation project. The event will be used to look at performance within LAA's across all priority areas, identifying practice, learning and innovation.

North West Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (NWIEP)

The North West Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (NWIEP) was established following the publication of the National Improvement and Efficiency Strategy in 2007. The partnership is seen as being at the heart of local arrangements for support, with a central role in setting the strategic ambition for improvement and efficiency, fully owned and driven by all local authorities in the region.

All North West local authorities and fire authorities are full members of the partnership.

The partnership has £22m of pump priming funding that is being made available to the region over the next three years by which time funding will cease and from 2011 the partnership will need to be self sustaining.

NWIEP have agreed to give the FRSS in the region £450K in funding to assist with the delivery of the following programmes:

Community Leadership: This programme will enhance community leadership capability to meet the challenges set by the National Framework 2008 - 2011. The move to a transformational leadership agenda underpins the programme, and this links with the new leadership model and framework for the Fire and Rescue Service, the Aspire model. The course will focus on developing the appropriate range of skills and competencies for leaders in community and

partnership settings.

Value for Money: This programme aims to deliver increased efficiencies through developing innovative solutions and cooperation in sharing best working practices.

Environmental Sustainability: This programme will facilitate the sharing of knowledge and experience in relation to environmental management and sustainability issues and working together to reduce the impact that the NWFRSs activities have on the environment.

Innovation: This programme will develop key networking processes and support innovation through all other regional networks (e.g. Fire Safety and Organisational Development). The programme will also support improvement and efficiency through all five fire authorities.

North West Fire and Rescue Project Office

The North West Fire and Rescue Project Office are based at Leigh Fire station in GMC and is responsible for;

- the roll out of the Regional Control Centre and Fire Link programmes
- liaising with the Chief Fire Officers and CFOA committees to identify areas for collaboration throughout the region
- development and production of the NWFRMB Business Plan
- liaising with the North West Improvement and Efficiency Partnership regarding regional programmes
- monitoring the delivery of the NWFRMB Business Plan and NWIEP programmes and to produce update reports for the board and partnership.
- providing secretarial support for the LACC and NWFRMB
- liaison with FRS staff seconded to GoNW

The following staff are currently working in the project office and deliver the above functions on behalf of the NWFRMB and FRS in the region.

Mark Carpenter is an Assistant Chief Fire Officer with Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Services and is currently seconded to the post of NWFRS Improvement and Efficiency Programme Manager.

Brian Mitchelhill is an Area Manager seconded from Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service and is the North West Fire & Rescue Regional Project Manager with responsibility for overseeing the Resilience project.

Fiona Hodson is HR Manager who has worked for Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service and is currently seconded to the North West Fire Control Company as the Regional HR Advisor.

Adele Forster is North West Regional Programme Support Officer and is a new recruit to the Fire and Rescue Services having previously worked overseas as an Area and Commercial

Manager with UK tour operators and within training and events management.

Brian Litherland is a Station Manager with Cheshire Fire & Rescue service seconded to the national FiRecontrol project team as Business Relationship Manager for the North West.

Adrian Luty is a Group Manager with Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service seconded to the government office of the North West as the Fire and Regional Liaison Officer.

