

Appendix to Agenda Item 150

East Sussex Fire Authority Integrated Risk Management Annual Action Plan 2008/09

Consultation Draft

Alternative language / format etc...
(Graphics please put this page in)

Index

(Graphics please complete page numbers after formatting etc)

Foreword by the Chairman of East Sussex Fire Authority

Executive Summary

Introduction

Action Plan 2008/09

Main Proposal

Progress on previous items agreed under the Integrated Risk Management (IRM) programme

How we assess risk

How this plan meets our Aims & Objectives

Fire Authority Aims & Objectives

Consultation

Key Documents List

Equality Impact Assessment

Contact Us

Questionnaire

Foreword by the Chairman of East Sussex Fire Authority

The concept of risk management has now become embedded in and influences all activities undertaken by the Fire Authority and the Fire & Rescue Service. This means that planning to effectively manage and reduce risks in our communities is at the heart of everything we do. In promoting our vision of 'Achieving a Safer Community' we are committed to making East Sussex and the City of Brighton & Hove a safer place in which to live, work and visit. The Fire Authority is seeking to deliver continuous improvement in the services it provides and we will achieve this by investing in our employees, forging strong relationships with a range of partners and valuing diversity.

This document contains our proposals for the Fire Authority's fifth Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP), which follows on from the implementation programmes initiated over the last four years. Policy changes introduced in East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (ESFRS) between 2004/05 and 2007/08 have allowed the Service to deploy resources more efficiently and effectively, and as a result of this work, many improvements have been made.

We have also had the opportunity to review and evaluate many areas of our service provision and are now in a position to propose further improvements that have become apparent from those reviews.

Our plans, therefore, demonstrate continued change, supported by appropriate review to ensure that benefits accrue while providing a high quality emergency response service at a price people can afford. Although the precise situation is unclear at present, our best forecasts predict that Government grants will decrease in real terms over the medium term. It is therefore vital that we spend every pound of public money effectively. This is especially so as our assessment clearly shows that we need to increase investment in risk prevention.



Mike Murphy - Chairman

Executive Summary

This consultation document outlines proposals to further improve the way that East Sussex Fire Authority delivers its services. The primary reason for the proposals is to ensure that we use the resources available to us in the best way possible e.g. matching resources to actual demand.

Adoption of one of the proposed changes will allow East Sussex Fire Authority to provide a more efficient and effective service to the people of East Sussex and the City of Brighton & Hove, without unnecessary or unjustifiable increases in the amount of money that we collect via Council Tax.

It is important to us that you consider our proposals and give us any feedback you may feel appropriate.

We will consider all responses received during the consultation period and your views will help to inform the Fire Authority in determining the implementation plan, which will commence in April 2008.

You have until 20 December 2007 to give us your views and details of how to respond are on page 24. Full contact details are also given should you require further information.

Proposals in summary

It is proposed to examine the effectiveness of alternative duty systems and seek to change from our current wholtime shift duty system, if improvements could be realised.

Introduction

Reason for this Plan

East Sussex Fire Authority provides a range of prevention, protection and operational intervention and rescue services across the County of East Sussex and the City of Brighton & Hove. Each Fire Authority in England is required to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). The IRMP outlines identified risk and how we intend to work with a wide range of stakeholders to reduce those risks. Prior to an IRMP being introduced, the Fire Authority is required to consult with stakeholders and seek views on proposals contained within the IRMP. This consultation draft is intended to allow you to consider our proposals and to encourage you to make comment. We will consider those views submitted before consultation closes on 20 December 2007, making our final decisions in January 2008. The proposals will be implemented from April 2008.

This IRMP

This IRMP is the fifth Annual Action Plan that we have produced. It is intended to better match our resources to our demand ensuring that we have an appropriate level of response available when we need it, whilst improving our ability to free up resources when demand for intervention is low. This matching process should allow us to use any excess resources to invest in proactive services e.g. prevention and protection, rather than response. We are also committed to internal reform, so that we are able to continue to meet new challenges and changing expectations. Like all public services, we expect to have to provide value for money and to offer a wider range of higher-quality services to meet community expectations. At the same time, we will strive to meet the stated expectations from Central Government regarding public service delivery. To be judged as improving, we will require a continuous upward trend in performance.

Action Plan 2008/09

Recent History

Previous Annual Action Plans: We have proposed, consulted upon, agreed, and implemented four previous Integrated Risk Management Annual Action Plans (all of which are available on our website). The general direction of these plans has been to consider and, wherever possible, improve the service we provide, and ensure we place prevention and protection of local communities and the built environment at the core of our service delivery, whilst maintaining the fundamental emergency response element of our fire and rescue service. Alongside these service delivery and resource adjustments, we have been realigning our internal practices and procedures to ensure that we have sufficient flexibility and focus to achieve our overarching aim of a safer community. Details of outcomes achieved via previous plans can be found on page 12.

Current Position

2008/09 Annual Action Plan: We propose that in the financial year 2008/09 we carry out the following actions;

Adopt a shift system that best reflects our local needs, ensuring that we have appropriate levels of response available when needed but with an improved ability to free up resources when demand for intervention is low.

Look Forward

Future Annual Action Plans: We will continue to examine the widest range of prevention, protection and response services that we currently or could provide.

At all times, we will be using an evidence-based approach, considering risks to our communities and the best ways of reducing those risks.

We will look for opportunities to increase the value for money that is used to deliver our services and, where able, we will continue to generate true efficiency savings without reducing the quality of service.

Our general direction of travel and the outcomes that we will strive to achieve, are outlined in our 5 Year Strategic Plan, available via our website – www.esfrs.org.

Main Proposal

Introduction

In East Sussex and the City of Brighton & Hove, six fire stations are permanently staffed 24 hours a day (Hove, Preston Circus, Roedean, Eastbourne, Hastings and The Ridge).

These stations use the traditional 2,2,4 staffing system (two day shifts, two night shifts, four days off). Staffing levels are maintained using a 'ridership factor' which means we have more people on each watch than we necessarily need, to ensure sufficient personnel are always available during periods of staff absence.

This also means that the stations are fully crewed at all times, regardless of the fact that the number of incidents can vary greatly throughout the day and night, as demonstrated in Chart 1.

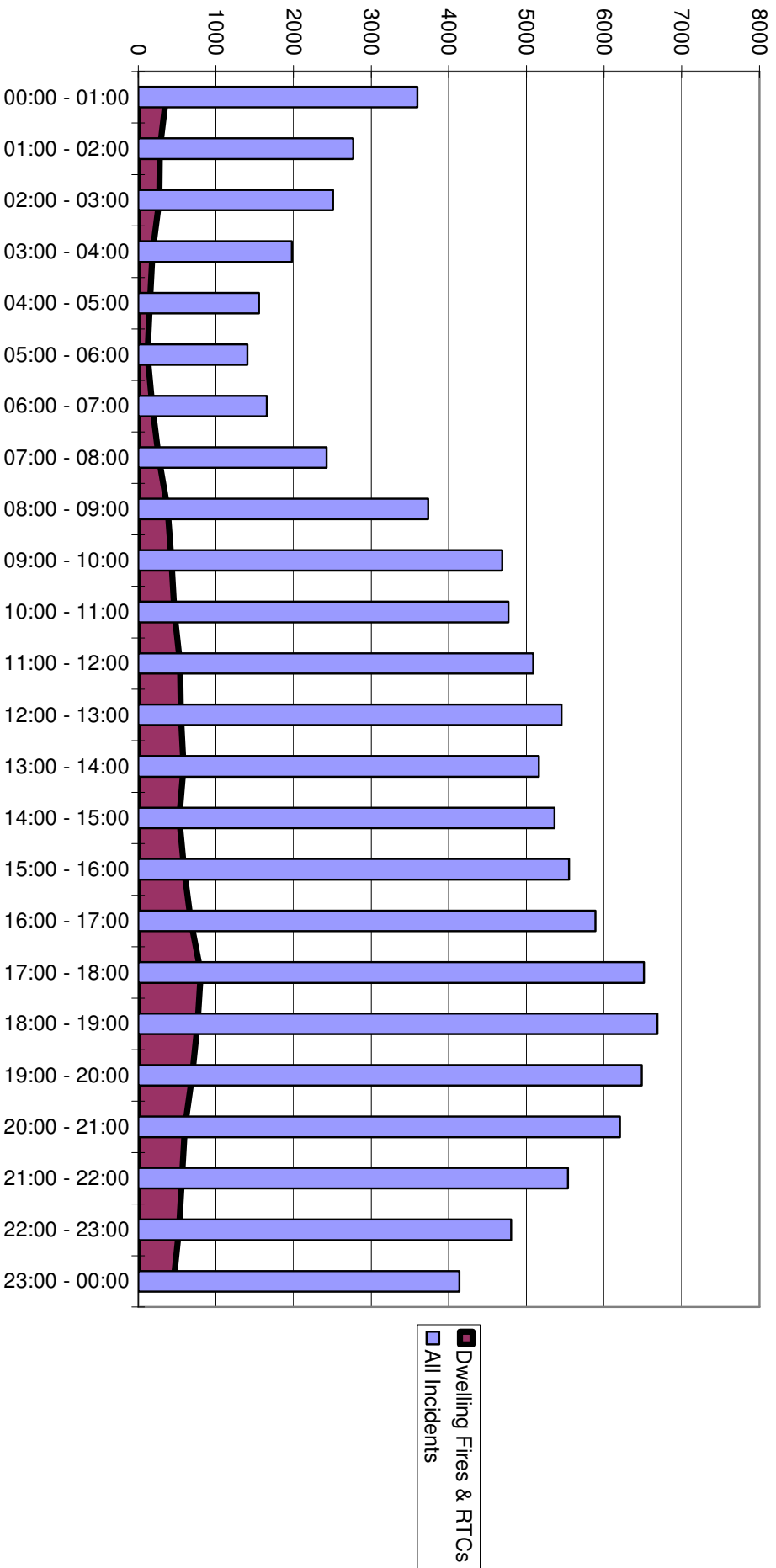
It is our intention to match our resources more closely to local demand.

Although there are several alternative duty systems across the UK, they fall broadly into two groups – Variable Crewing & Annualised Hours. Both systems are designed to more accurately link local supply and demand.

These proposals detail four options available to us for our six shift stations.

Chart 1

**Seven Year Fluctuation in Number of Calls by Hour 01/04/2000 – 31/03/2007
Total No. of calls – 103,927**



Option A - Variable Crewing

A typical variable crewing system is designed to link supply and demand across different hours and days of the week. The system would result in more fire appliances being available during busier periods (e.g. between 1000hrs and 2200hrs) and conversely fewer during quieter periods (e.g. 2200hrs and 1000hrs).

Effective crewing is achieved by varying the start and finish time for staff, rather than having a fixed shift system for all personnel (current 2,2,4 system). Staff may work a variety of shift arrangements to create an overlap of resources for busy periods, while still maintaining core staff during quieter periods.

A staffing model can be designed to suit both organisational and individual needs, e.g. four x 12 hour days followed by four days off (basic 42 hour shift pattern), or 5 x 8.4 hour shifts followed by 2 days off. Alternatively, the system can be made to closer match resources (number of fire appliances) to demand (number of incidents). As calls decrease after midnight, then rise after 0800hrs, it may be more appropriate to provide sufficient crewing for some fire appliances to be available for 12 or 16 hours per day, rather than 24 hours.

Option B - Annualised Hours System

An annualised system removes the current need for a 'ridership factor' by the creation of 5 watches, each with the exact number of staff required to crew the vehicles, as well as a small additional allowance to cover expected absences.

All leave is programmed into the roster, so there is no need for additional staff to cover variations of people on leave. If an unplanned absence arises the rota system allocates a member of staff to cover the absence, staff are contacted and used to cover the gap created.

Typically with such a system, the number of fire appliances available during each 24 hour period remains constant.

With this system, staff bank a small number of hours which, if absences need covering, are available to be called on if required, similar to systems currently used in other industries.

Option C - Continue with current shift pattern

By staying as we are, we can ensure that appliances at all six stations are staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, throughout the year. However, this requires the maintenance of the additional 'ridership factor' in our area, with stations remaining fully staffed during quieter periods.

Option D - Alternative Combination of options A, B and C

Alternative options can be combined to identify and utilise staff capacity more effectively. Spare capacity can be detached from the night shift and used on the day shift, whilst still maintaining operational resilience. This reserve of staff can then be redeployed to undertake a range of duties within a more flexible shift structure and in a variety of roles as required (e.g. Home Fire Safety Visits or training).

Progress on previous items agreed under the Integrated Risk Management (IRM) programme

Action Plan 2004/05

Operational

- Reduce the Pre-Determined Attendance (PDA) for commercial fire alarm systems from 2 crews to 1 – Completed.
- Only send aerial appliances to an incident on request from incident commander – Completed.
- Set performance standard for attendance to Road Traffic Collisions (50% in 8 min, 90% in 13 min) – Completed.

Internal issues

- Define core (essential) stations – Completed.
- Enable outposting between all duty systems – partially complete – now able to outpost between day crewed and shift stations.
- Agree system for pre-arranged overtime – Completed.
- Consider use of Automatic Electronic Defibrillators – Completed – AEDs now purchased, along with complementary Oxygen Therapy equipment.
- Consider appropriate numbers of personnel able to operate specialist equipment – Completed.

Action Plan 2005/06

Operational

- Investigate fire provision on East/West border – Changes have been implemented as a result of the 2006/07 IRM process carried out by East and West Sussex Fire Authorities.
- Review speed and weight of attendance – New attendance times have been set for all types of call and weight of response for life-threatening incidents has also been set in the 2006/07 plan.
- Aerial Appliances – The aerial appliance at Preston Circus, Brighton was permanently removed and the Hove aerial appliance was moved to Preston Circus to replace it in May 2005.

Internal Issues

- Implement changes to night time and Bank Holiday activities - Completed.
- Review wholetime shift patterns - New systems have been implemented for staff working the day-crewed duty system.
- Consider implementing a flexible duty arrangement at Battle fire station – Completed.

Fire Safety

- Evaluate effectiveness of our previous community safety activities - Work has begun and an action plan has been incorporated into our regular business audit and review programme.
- Evaluate effectiveness of existing partnership working – A toolkit for evaluating partnerships has been produced and is in use.

Other

Evaluate workload resulting from Government actions - An appropriate process has been developed to enable evaluation of various scenarios.

Action Plan 2006/07

Fire Safety

Prioritise proactively community safety initiatives in areas where FSEC has identified a higher than average risk of fires/fatalities across the Service area - Teams are now in place to begin this preventative approach in the form of Home Safety Visits.

Operational

Review type, speed & weight of attendance:

Type – In future, we will mobilise the nearest standard fire appliance to non life-threatening incidents, thereby keeping Extended Rescue Appliances available for any potential life-threatening incidents that may simultaneously occur.

Speed – Incidents classified as life-threatening will attract the following standard speed of response:

- 50% of calls in 8 minutes
- 90% of calls in 13 minutes

(This standard has already been in place for Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) since 1 April 2004 as a result of our first IRMP.)

Incidents classified as non life-threatening will attract a standard response of 90% to calls in 15 minutes.

AFD (Automatic Fire Detection) calls to commercial premises will attract a standard response time to 90% calls in 15 minutes.

Weight – It has been determined that 7 firefighters can establish a safe system of work to successfully resolve the majority of dwelling fires and RTCs, but a standard fire appliance in our area can only accommodate a maximum of 6 firefighters. Therefore, whilst recognising that 7 firefighters can establish a safe system of work, we intend to maintain a minimum attendance of 8 firefighters as the initial response to dwelling fires and RTCs on 90% of occasions.

Resources

As a result of an examination of risk and resources, the existing single Heavy Rescue Unit has been replaced by two Technical Rescue Units.

Other

West Sussex Fire Authority has relocated some staff from Shoreham to Littlehampton fire station, as part of their overall risk reduction strategy. In accordance with current arrangements for cross-county support, firefighters at Hove will assist in providing part of the 'first attendance' during the evening/night time for that part of West Sussex between Shoreham fire station and the East/West border.

Outcomes achieved from the first 3 year's plans:

- The number of AFDs responded to by 2 appliances was reduced by 44% in 2004/05 and 39% in 2005/06*
- Unnecessary turnouts by high-reach vehicles were reduced by 80% in 2004/05 and 78% in 2005/06*
- As a result of the Aerial Appliance changes 8 posts were saved and 4 posts were re-deployed into a community safety team on a full time basis.

These changes provided greater opportunity to carry out more proactive initiatives and as a result 16,180 Home Safety Visits have been undertaken and 21,942 domestic smoke alarms installed since 2004.

(* based on 2003/04 figures)

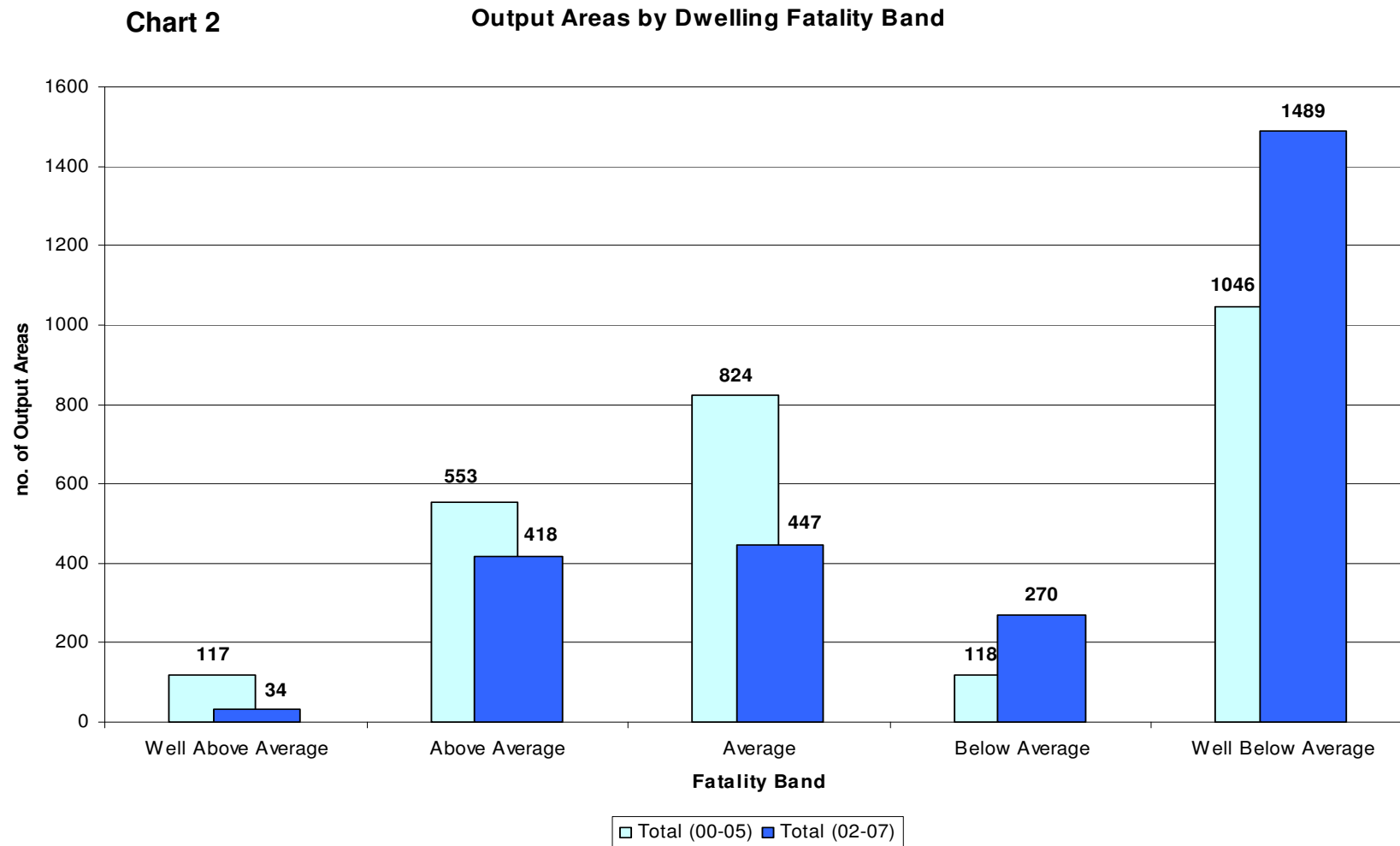
How we assess risk

Risk is assessed using a combination of the following resources:

- Fire Service Emergency Cover (FSEC) Toolkit
- Management Information Database System (MIS)
- Use of Partnerships

These methods help us to assess risk, enabling us to identify ways in which to drive down that risk. In recent years, particular attention has been paid to reducing the number of dwelling fires and the risk of death or injury resulting from them. Specific preventative initiatives have led to a consistent reduction in dwelling fire risk over the past 3 years. Chart 2 illustrates this impact.

Chart 2 shows the results of our risk reduction over the past 3 years. There has been a dramatic reduction in the total number of areas that are in the average, above average, or well above average, risk categories and a corresponding increase in the number of areas that are in the below, or well below, average risk categories.



Action Plan 2007/08 (currently being implemented)

Internal issues

- **Evaluation of previous IRMPs:** Having already implemented three previous Annual Action Plans and delivered the elements contained within the first Strategic Integrated Risk Management Plan, which covered the period 2004/05 to 2006/07, it was appropriate to undertake work to investigate both the effectiveness and the impact upon the community of our first three Annual Action Plans, with an emphasis on the outcomes that have been achieved. A programme of independent audits and reviews of the effectiveness and outcomes of previous IRMPs has now begun, with results reported via Corporate Management Team to the Fire Authority.
- **Examination of the effectiveness of alternative duty systems:** This will take account of present and future service requirements and risk based service delivery. We need to be mindful that the employment environment is changing, particularly in terms of the impact of the Working Time Directive and, therefore, staying as we are may simply not be an option. This work now forms the basis for the proposals within this year's annual action plan.
- **Integration of work, training and personnel development:** We are conscious of the fact that, no matter how attractive or compelling a particular strategy may be for reducing community risk, we need to ensure that we have the right staff in the right place at the right time, with the right skills, attitudes and cultural awareness, to actually deliver those outcomes. Therefore, we intend to undertake a series of small, focused reviews which consider whether we have the correct linkages between policy changes to improve community safety and cohesion and the training and personnel development systems necessary to ensure we can deliver effectively. This work is under way.
- **Development of business resilience:** We are aware of our duties under the Civil Contingencies Act, namely:
 - To prepare for a wide range of unwanted, man-made and natural events.
 - To ensure that we can continue to deliver the services necessary to mitigate the effects of the event and bring it to a successful conclusion.

The Fire Authority will conduct a thorough review of our own resilience arrangements, to ensure that we are able to keep our own business running, in order to provide the support and services that will enable community safety and cohesion to be maintained, no matter what the threat. This work is under way.

How this plan meets our Aims & Objectives

Proposals within this IRMP will ensure we have the right resources, in the right place, at the right time, giving us the flexibility to achieve a safer community through an appropriate mix of:

- Changes to the way in which we educate people to keep themselves and their families safer and preventing fires occurring, thereby reducing the need to call the Fire & Rescue Service for assistance. (Prevention)
- Arrangements to help ensure that people can safely evacuate from any building should a fire occur. (Protection)
- Properly-equipped and trained operational staff who when called upon, can provide an efficient and effective emergency response to any emergency incident that we attend. (Response)

The primary vision of East Sussex Fire Authority is 'Achieving a Safer Community'. Our aim is to make our County and City a safer place to live and work in and to improve wellbeing for all our citizens. East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service has 3 overarching aims supported by a number of specific objectives:

- To provide a community safety service embracing community and legislative Fire Safety and operational intervention at incidents.
- To be a good employer and be recognised as such.
- To provide and develop cost effective services in consultation with the local community in accordance with Best Value requirements.

Our Vision, Aims and Objectives are illustrated overleaf. Further details, as well as our progress in achieving them, can be found in our Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP). Copies of our BVPP can be downloaded from www.esfrs.org or you can request a copy from the 'Contact us' section at the end of this document (page 24)

Fire Authority Aims & Objectives

(CFA Chart Graphics please put this in)

Consultation

We want your views

We are genuinely committed to seeking the views of those most affected by our proposals. We are also keen to receive suggestions on how we can improve our proposals. We have established a wide range of methods for gathering people's views. There is a form at the back of this plan, which we hope you will use. We have written to a wide variety of organisations, inviting them to comment on our proposals and we will have a programme of internal meetings with staff to seek their opinions and views. Independent researchers will conduct focus groups to allow in-depth exploration of the issues within this IRMP. Finally, we have a section dedicated to the IRMP on our website, where you can download further copies of this plan and leave your comments - see www.esfrs.org.

Staff Consultation Meetings

A series of staff meetings will be held at HQ and on the shift stations in order to provide more detail on the proposals and answer any initial questions staff may have. These will be conducted by Senior Officers and the Head of Community Risk Management.

Following these meetings, focus groups will be held by an independent facilitator which will provide further opportunities for views, concerns and suggestions to be heard and presented to the Fire Authority before any final decisions are made.

How to respond

We would ask you to use the form at the back of this plan, as it will allow us to collate your comments more clearly. We are also able to receive comments in writing, via email, via our website or by phone. Copies are available on request in large print and audio versions, or in a range of other languages. Please advise us of your needs using the 'Contact us' section overleaf.

When consultation ends

Consultation will end on Thursday 20 December 2007. Any comments/observations must be received at our Headquarters by 5 p.m. on that day in order to be considered. If you can respond sooner, that will help us considerably.

What happens next?

Once the consultation period ends, we will collate all the responses that we have received. The Fire Authority has called a special meeting on 17 January 2008 to make a final decision on the proposals.

Key Documents List

- Regional Management Board Business Plan
- Annual Best Value Performance Plans
- Strategic Best Value Performance Plans
- Five Year Strategic Plan 2007/08 to 2011/12
- Annual Integrated Risk Management Plans (2004/05, 2005/06, 2006/07, 2007/08)
- Borough Command Action Plans
- Station Action Plans
- Corporate Action Plans
- Strategic Plan - supporting Corporate Risk and Resourcing Plan
- Fire Authority Improvement Plan

Equality Impact Assessment

(to be updated once document content is agreed)

An equality impact assessment relating to this plan has been completed below. We have made provisions to ensure that this document offers alternative and positive approaches to people with disabilities. If you wish to comment on or discuss any issues relating to equality and diversity please use the 'Contact Us' section at the end of this plan (page 24).

Function/Department	Community Risk Management
Person responsible for the assessment	Deputy Chief Fire Officer
Name of the policy/service/function to be addressed	Integrated Risk Management
Date of assessment	31/08/2007
Is this a new or existing policy?	Not applicable – Statutory document produced annually.
Briefly describe the aims, objectives and the purpose of the policy.	To produce an annual Integrated Risk Management Plan which complies with all statutory and best practice guidance & meets all audit requirements. To identify a range of options available to the Fire Authority for reduction of risk in the community. To provide a reference document for partners, stakeholders and the public.
Are there any associated objectives of the policy? Please explain.	The plan contains and adheres to East Sussex Fire Authority's strategic aims and objectives.
Who is intended to benefit from the policy and in what way?	The plan is intended for Members, staff, stakeholders and partner organisations to inform them of our intended actions during the next financial year. The community as a whole is intended to benefit from investment in prevention activities. The workforce affected by the change should also benefit from a more flexible system of work.

<p>What outcomes are wanted from this policy</p>	<p>To produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan. To provide a range of risk reduction measures. To provide a reference document for partners, stakeholders and the public, so that the Authority's intentions in achieving its aims and objectives can be clearly seen.</p>
<p>What factors / forces could contribute / detract from the outcomes</p>	<p>Resistance to changes proposed may cause concern in respect of the Fire Authority achieving its stated aims and objectives. The presentation of the information itself, may cause difficulties to some of the readers who may have disabilities e.g. dyslexia. Please see the disabilities strand set out below.</p>
<p>Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy?</p>	<p>The main stakeholders are Members, staff, partner organisations and the public.</p>
<p>Who implements the policy and who is responsible for the policy</p>	<p>This statutory document is part of the Fire Authority's Integrated Risk Management planning process. The policies within the plan are owned by the Fire Authority.</p>
<p>Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact on:</p> <p>Age Disability Gender Race (promoting good race relations) Religious/Belief Sexual Orientation- Transgender/Transsexual</p>	<p>Age - No Disability – Yes. The 2008/09 Annual Action Plan has been further developed this year and the font size has been increased to improve accessibility, reading and understanding of the information involved. The changes were made in order to make the document more accessible to all readers but particularly those that may suffer from dyslexia. Upon request, this document can be printed on different coloured paper, format and sizes as per guidance issued on the British Dyslexia Association website. The font size and layout was changed where possible, after receiving comments from staff members who found the font size too small. No negative comments have been received by the public. A reading tool is provided on the Service's website for those suffering from visual impairment and arrangements are in place with translation services providers to translate a summary of key corporate documents on request. Gender - No Race (promoting good race relations)- No Religious/Belief – No Sexual Orientation-Transgender/Transsexual – No</p>
<p>Can this differential impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one or more of the above groups?</p>	<p>Yes, it will improve accessibility to the document under requirements as laid out in the Disability Discrimination Act.</p>

As above eliminating unlawful discrimination	Not applicable	
Completing Officer	Name: Garry Collins	Date: 31/08/07
Officer responsible for policy / function / activity	Name: Chris Large	Date: 31/08/07
Diversity/Equality Officer	Name: Mick Feather	Date: 31/08/07

Contact Us

East Sussex Fire Authority is keen to hear what you think of the proposals contained in this Annual Action Plan and would welcome your comments. Contact us in any of the following ways:

- Call us on 0845 130 8855
- Fill out the questionnaire overleaf and return to the address given
- Complete our online questionnaire which can be found on our website www.esfrs.org in the IRMP section
- Email your comments to irm@esfrs.org
- Write to us at the address opposite

The IRM Team
East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service
20 Upperton Road
Eastbourne
East Sussex
BN21 1EU

We would like you to provide your name and contact details, so that we can clarify your comments if required and respond to you in due course. We also plan to make the comments received publicly available - if you would prefer not to be identified, please let us know. Further copies of the plan are available from our website: www.esfrs.org

we want to hear your views ...

Questionnaire

(to be formatted by graphics to resemble last year's questionnaire – will be removable in order to send back responses)

Q1 The Action Plan is clear and easy to understand.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments

Q2 I support the general proposal to closer match resources to demand by changing the current duty system at shift stations.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments

Q3 I support the proposal to adopt Option A – a variable crewing duty system.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments

Q4 I support the proposal to adopt Option B - an annualised hours duty system.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments

Q5 I support the proposal to adopt Option C - to continue to operate the current duty system.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments

Q6 I support the proposal to adopt Option D - a combination of options A, B and C.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments

Q7 Please rank the proposed options in the order that you would prefer with '1' being the most preferred option.

Option A - Variable Crewing

Option B - Annualised Hours System

Option C - Continue with current shift pattern

Option D - Alternative Combination of options A, B and C

Any further comments

+ Other Service Planning and Budget Consultations to be added.