



**Shropshire**  
Fire and Rescue Service

# Career Development

(Grey Book Conditions of Service)

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*An Electronic Copy of this booklet can be found in the Development folder on Brigade\_Info on SY12.*

## Introduction

The information enclosed in this document provides an overview of the career path from the point of entry to the operational service to strategic level management.

It is our intention to provide career development information for staff not conditioned to Grey Book in due course.

All information provided in this booklet is correct at the time of printing. The contents of the booklet may, from time to time, change in response to organisational strategies. The booklet will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis in January each year. Any and all changes to the contents during the 12 month period will be found in the **Development folder listed under Brigade\_Info on SY12.**

# Levels of Responsibility

## **The Organisation:**

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service is fully committed to supporting the development of its staff and actively encourages participation in appropriate training and development programmes for those eligible to progress into management roles.

## **The Individual:**

Individuals who wish to progress their career within Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service should be committed to maintaining competence within their current role and actively seek feedback and further development opportunities within their own work environment.

Those wishing to progress to more senior roles must also work towards gaining a wide range of experiences. This can, in part, be achieved by putting themselves forward for selection to vacancies occurring in different disciplines whether at the same level or above. There may also, from time to time, be opportunities to take up short term secondments within other functions across the organisation. Experience in a range of roles will be **key** to developing skills to work effectively in middle or senior manager roles.

## **Individuals also have a responsibility to:**

- Keep individual development records (IDRs) up to date
- Participate in a personal review (IPDR) at least annually
- Have a full understanding of own role map and the personal qualities and attributes (PQAs) mapped to the role
- Ensure validity of all evidence provided against current role map standards
- Keep clear and concise overall records of own development
- Proactively seek information to improve knowledge base relating to development processes

## **Line Manager responsibilities include:**

- Carry out reviews with staff (IPDR) at least annually
- Understand role maps and personal qualities and attributes (PQAs), ensuring validity of judgements relating to competence
- Meet frequently with staff in development to ensure progress is maintained and issues addressed
- Provide opportunities for staff in development to demonstrate competence in all aspects of their role
- Provide guidance and advice where required
- Proactively seek information to improve knowledge base relating to development processes on behalf of team members

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service will continually monitor and review the effectiveness of the processes included in this booklet, in terms of what is delivered, how it is delivered and when. One of the ways in which we will do this will be to consider **your** feedback. If you wish to make constructive comments and make suggestions of improvements to any of our processes and or the contents of the booklet, please use the form provided at the back of this document. Additional copies are available from the Development Support Officer at the Training and Development Centre.

## Support

Support is available for staff and their managers from the Development Team based at the Training and Development Centre, Telford.

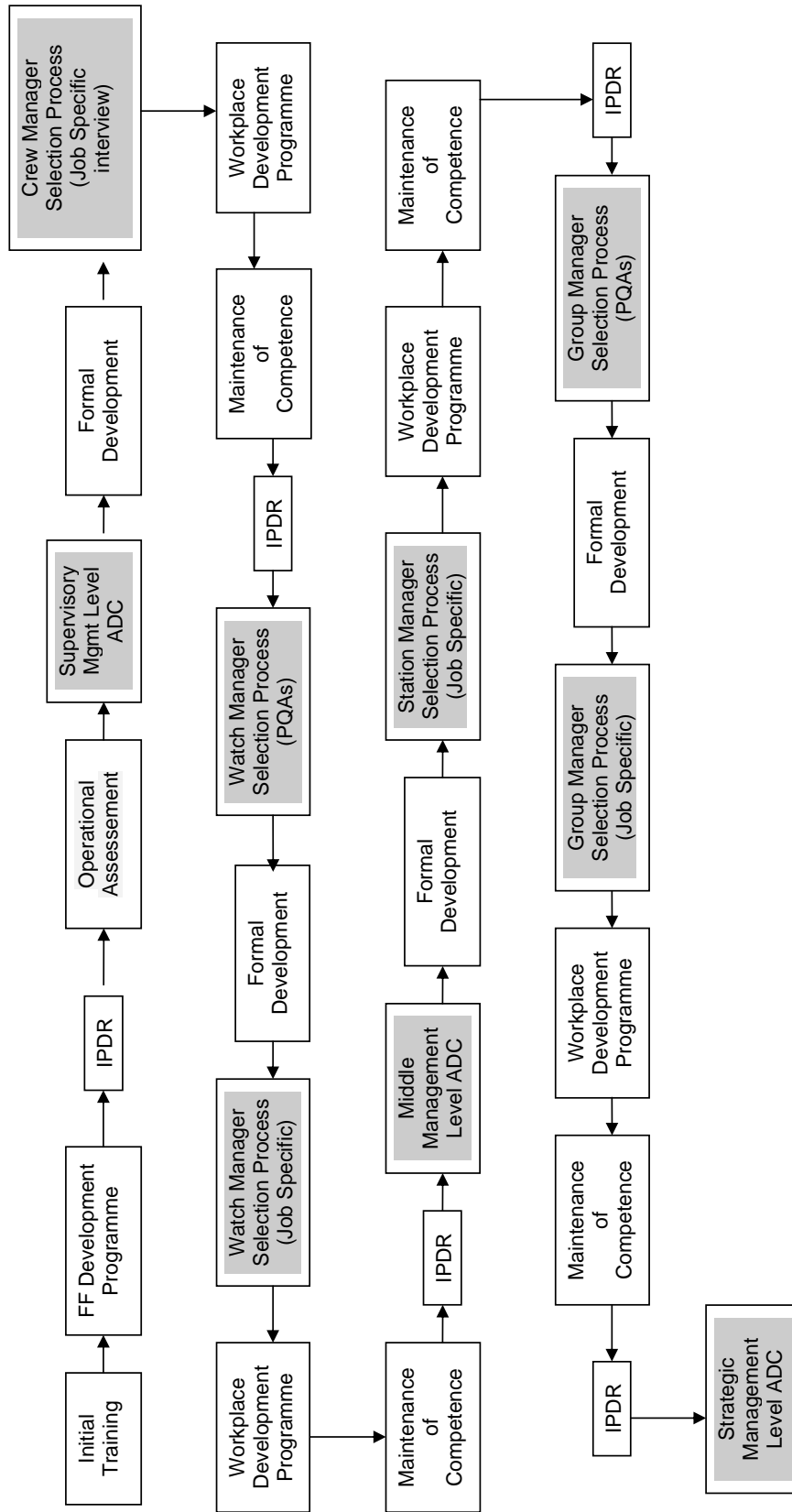
The Development Team is responsible for creating and implementing development programmes and maintenance of competence systems for all staff in line with IPDS requirements and the NJC Code of Practice. The Development function provides performance management information by quality assuring the outcomes of the programmes and continually evaluating the underlying processes. They do this through supporting assessors, line managers and those undertaking development, through assessment, verification and continuous professional development workshops.

The Development Team support the development of all staff, including those entering the assessment and development centre process and subsequent role specific development programmes. Guidance can also be sought from the team on the principles of Individual Performance Development Reviews and the application of Personal Qualities and Attributes to the role maps.

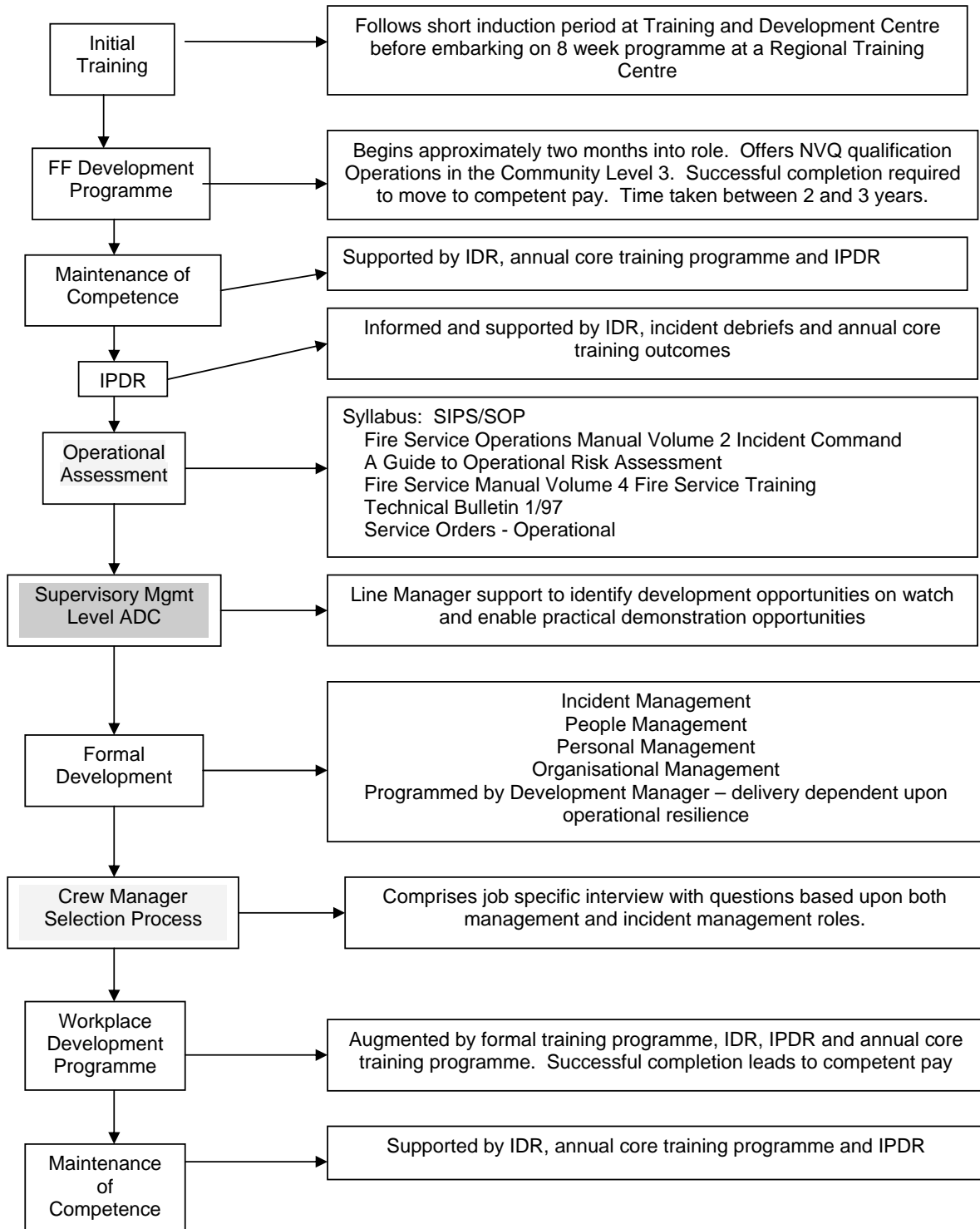
The team comprises fully qualified internal verifiers who fully support the long established Approved Centre for the delivery of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs). The Centre primarily supports Operations in the Community Level 3 NVQs for developing firefighters, but also offers Administration and Management NVQs to support staff and managers.

Some members of the team also represent the Service at regional events and work collaboratively in working groups to produce training programmes and operate standardization exercises relating to the national occupational standards. This helps to ensure consistency and transferability of skills across the West Midlands Regional Services group.

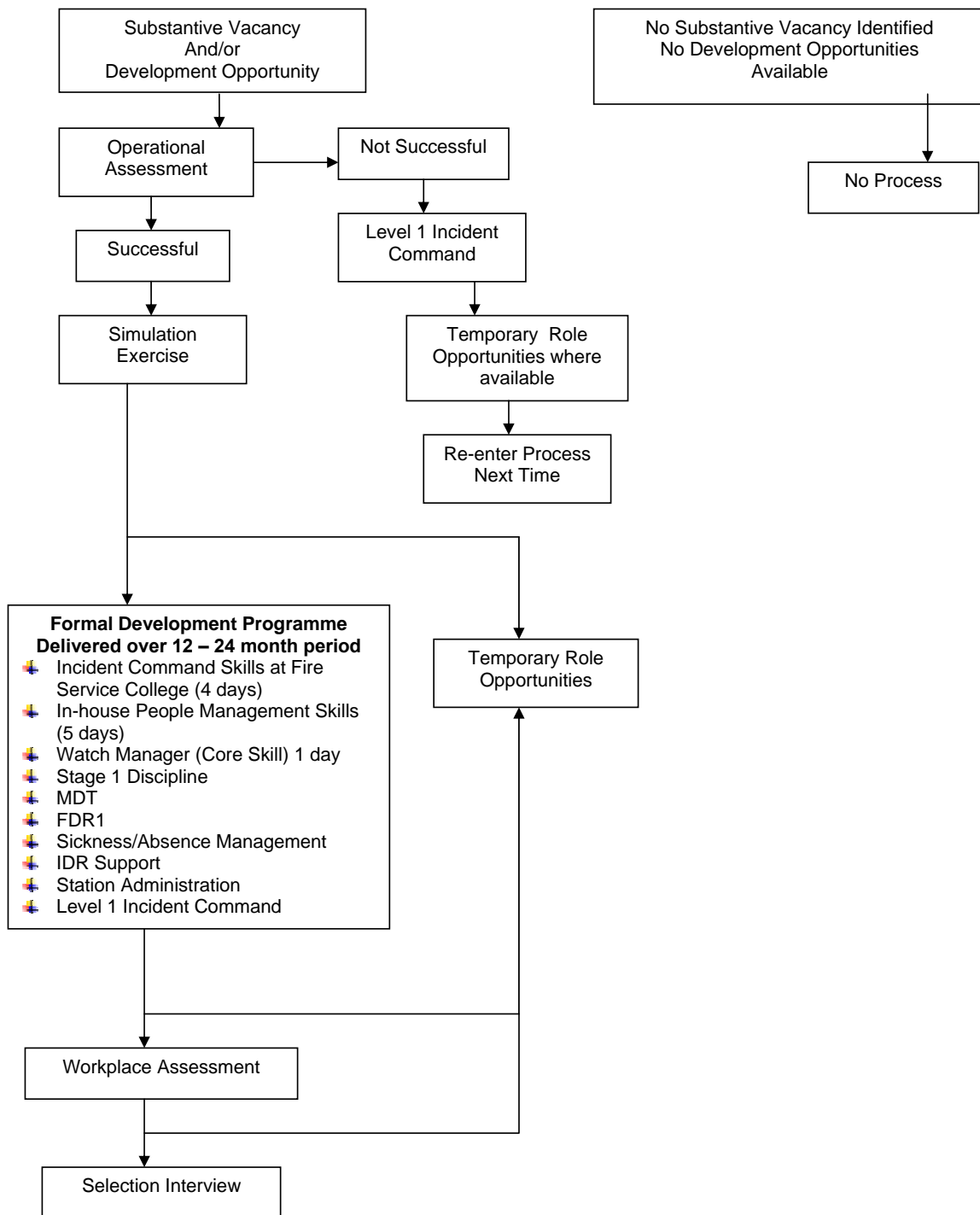
# Progression



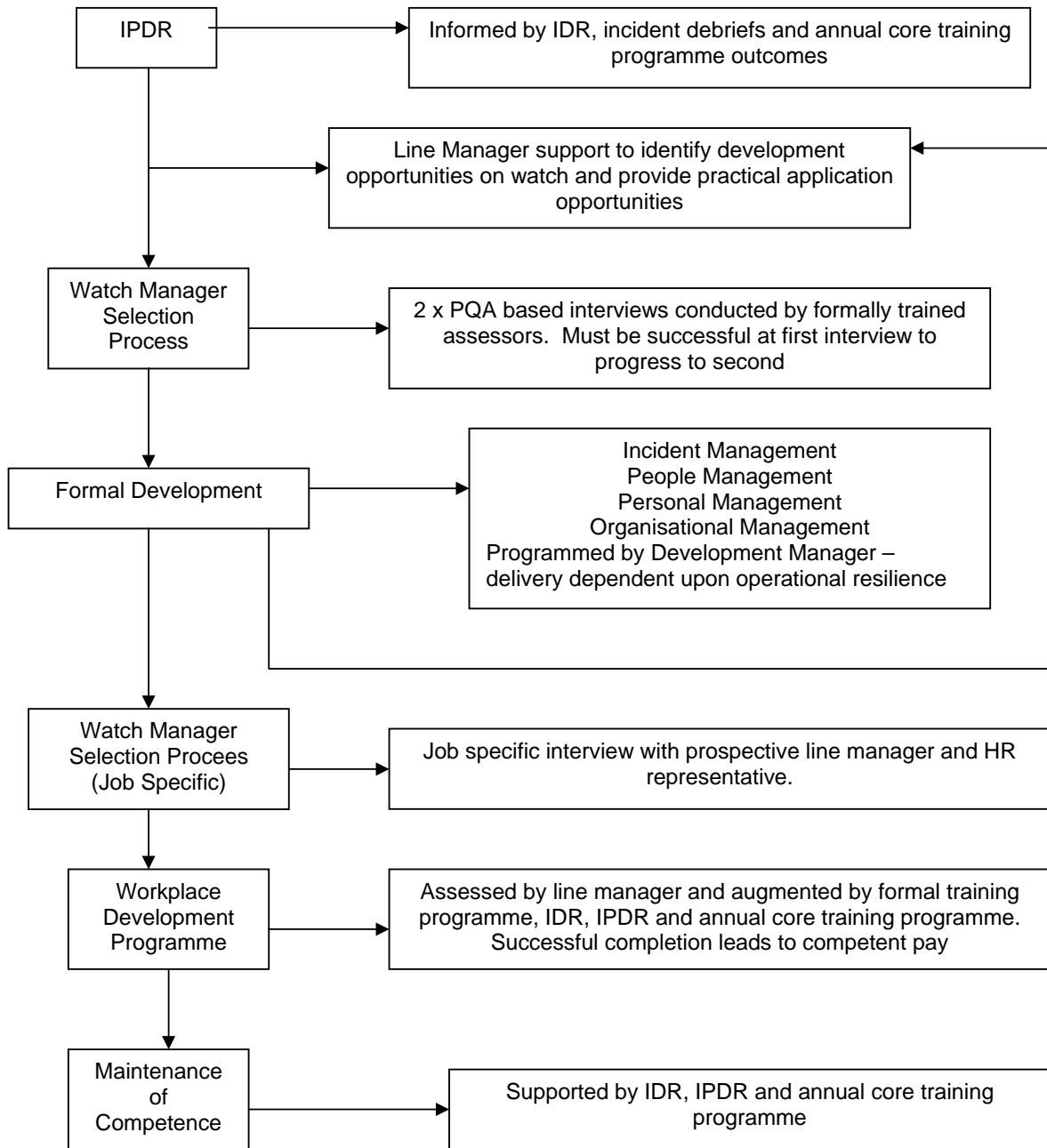
# Firefighter to Crew Manager



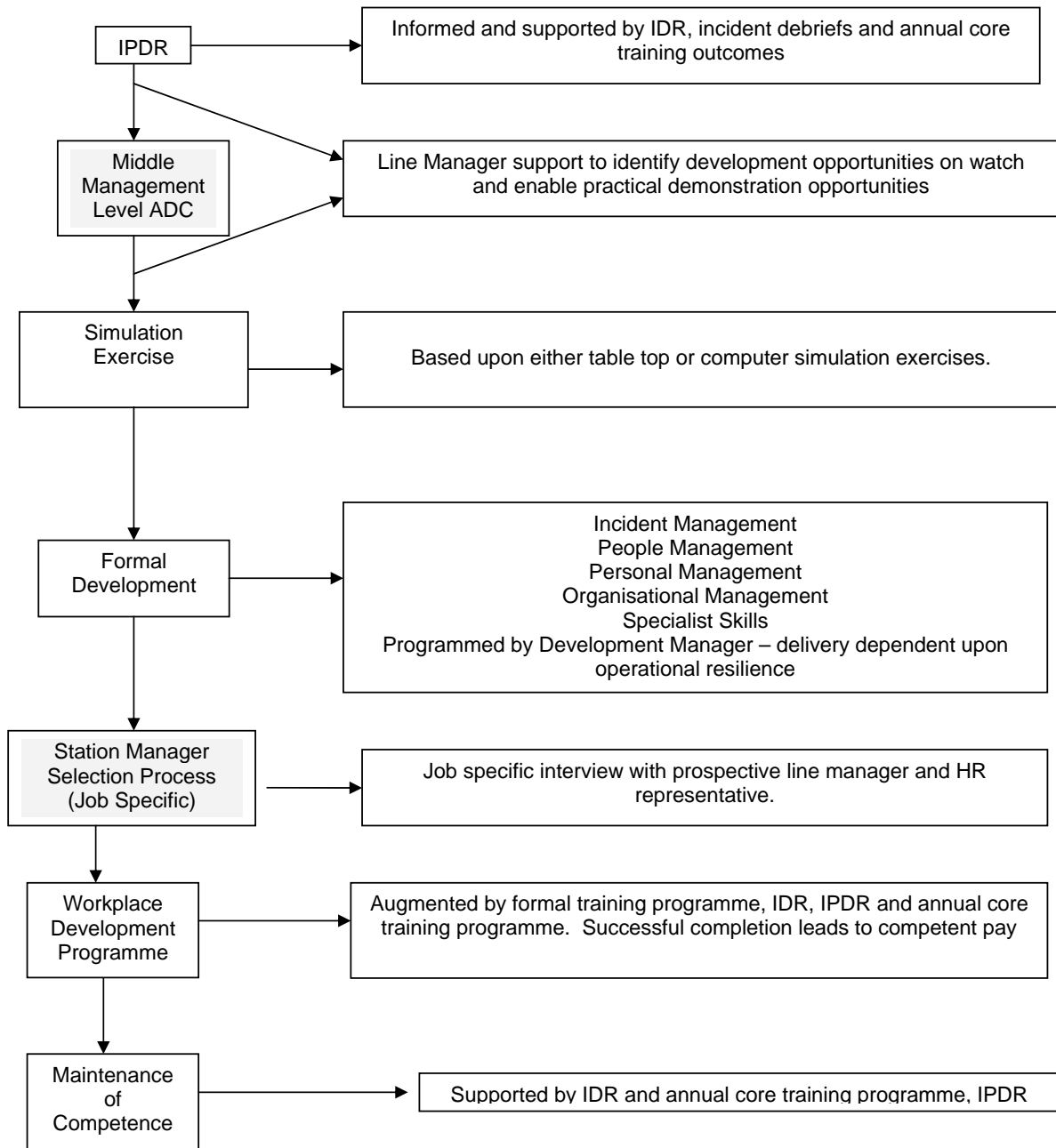
# Retained Duty Service Supervisory Level Development



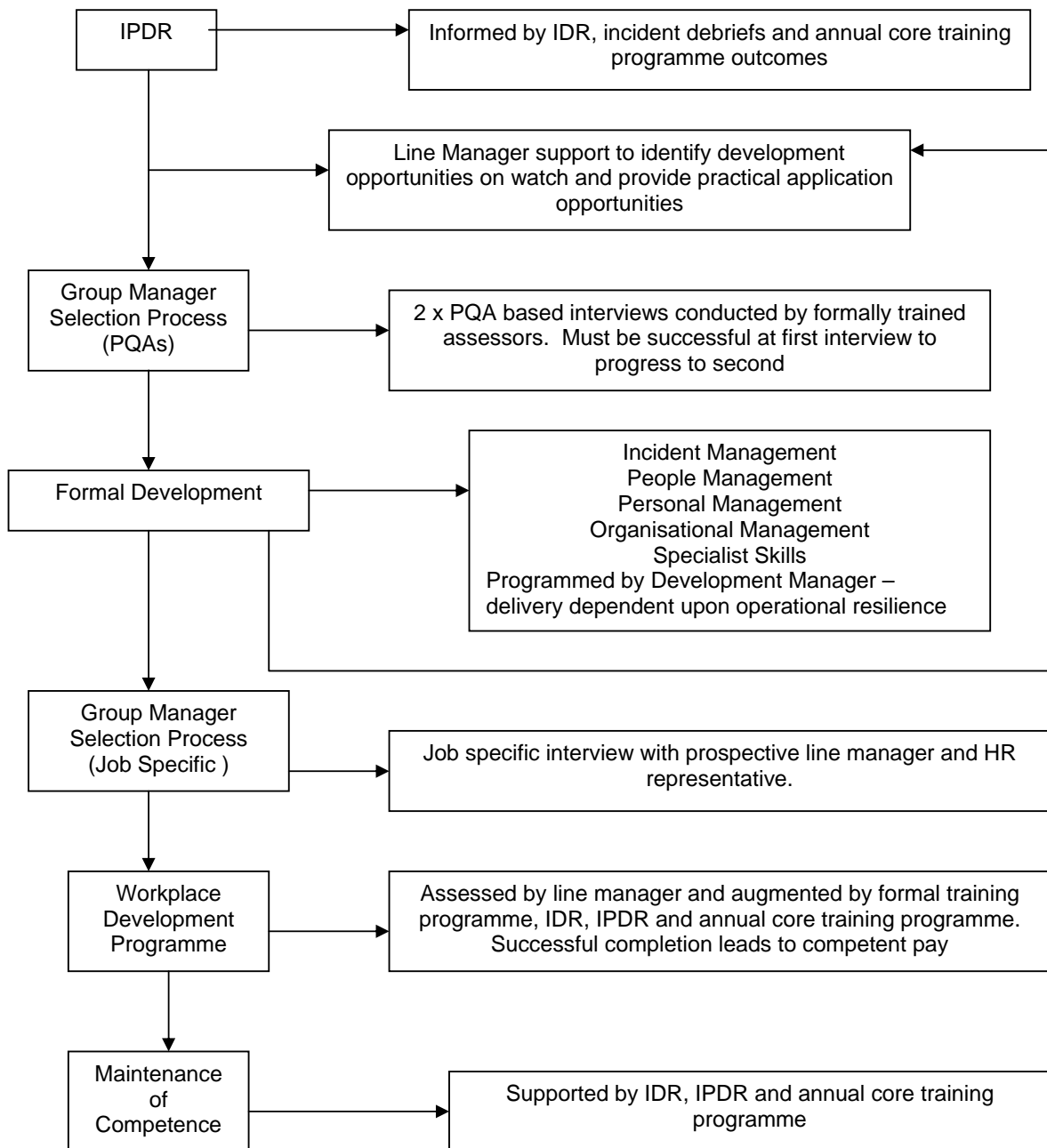
# Crew Manager to Watch Manager



# Watch Manager to Station Manager



# Station Manager to Group Manager



## Initial Development Programmes

During initial training, firefighters begin the first phase of the personal development cycle, acquiring skills and knowledge necessary to begin development towards becoming a competent firefighter. Following initial training, firefighters will spend a 'settling in' period on their own watches/stations. This period allows firefighters to become familiar with their working environment and acquire Brigade-specific skills not delivered during the initial training period. This 'settling in' period normally lasts for around two months. The firefighter will then embark upon a further phase of the personal development cycle, which requires skills to be consistently and competently demonstrated and developed further. This is known as the Firefighter Development Programme Brigade Order Training Number 5, Part 3.

### Firefighter Development Programme - Wholetime

The programme has been developed around the Operations in the Community Level 3 NVQ and successful completion of the full programme will result in receipt of the qualification. For wholetime firefighters, the full qualification is confirmation of their competence and leads to competent pay. The programme is designed to be completed within a maximum of 3 years.

### Firefighter Development Programme – Retained Duty System

The programme comprises some units taken from the Operations in the Community Level 3 NVQ, but more realistically reflects the practical challenges faced by those working and supporting a Retained Duty system. It is designed to allow staff to prove their competence and achieve competent pay, but does not lead to a formal qualification and is designed to be completed within 3 years.

### Fire Control Operator Development Programme

The Fire Control Operator Development Programme will be embarked upon by those having been in post for 6 months and who have successfully completed their initial training. This programme is based upon the principles of the Workplace Development Programmes mentioned on page 15 and set against the national occupational standards for Fire Control Operators and will result in attaining the competent rate of pay.

# Recording Performance and Development

## Individual Development Records (IDRs)

**For full details see Brigade Order Training No. 5 Part 1**

All operational personnel are issued with an Individual Development Record (IDR). This is designed to cover all aspects of core operational skills and enables activities to be recorded and for development needs to be identified. This is to be used as a personal reflective log and individuals are responsible for completing activity sheets either immediately following an activity/operational incident or before the end of the duty period. Where a development need has been identified it should be recorded and brought to the attention of the line manager who in turn will ensure it is addressed within agreed timescales. The record will aid the planning of station/watch training and be a comprehensive record of the level of operational competence of an individual at any one time. This record will help form the basis of discussions with a line manager either when an individual wishes to consider promotion or when continuance of Continual Professional Development (CPD) – Brigade Order Training No 5 Part 9 is recommended and always during an Individual Performance and Development Review.

## Individual Performance and Development Reviews (IPDRs)

**For full details see Brigade Order Training No. 5 Part 2**

The extract below is taken directly from the Guidance notes for this Brigade Order and will help explain the link between IPDRs and moving to the next role:

“An Individual Performance and Development Review is an **essential element of staff development**. It is the means by which every individual’s performance is aligned towards the achievement of service plans and the strategic direction of the Service, **whilst satisfying the requirements of the individual for continuous development opportunities and enhanced job satisfaction.**”

**Reviews should take place at least once per year and are a pre-requisite for entry into the ADC process.**

The major advantage of the process is that it improves communication between the individual and the line manager and also:

- **Provides the employee with an opportunity to understand how their performance (in terms of both strengths and development points) is viewed by their line manager.**
- Facilitates agreement of objectives in line with the service plan.
- **Provides the means for continuous review of performance and achievements.**

- **Ensures a shared understanding of the job and its requirements**
- **Evaluates the success of last years training/experience/development**
- **Identifies training needs, both formal and on-the-job.**
- **Allows for future career development to be explored.**
- Ensures management become aware of issues that may need policy, procedural, organisational amendment or variation.
- Contributes towards achieving CPD criteria

The Service Performance Plans and local team plans have clear objectives that state how and when they will be achieved. To achieve these objectives they need to be translated into individual objectives. The Review process is a vehicle to make this happen.

**The reviews are designed to strengthen, not replace, the ongoing dialogue between an individual and their line manager.** The focus will be on:

- key tasks
- **personal development issues**
- blocks to progress
- agreed action plans “

## Moving on

There are two different, but similar processes to follow for those wishing to move to a substantive position at the next level. Information on how to access the different bands of management is provided in the section on Assessment and Development Centres.

1) The first includes those wishing to move to the next band of management, e.g.:

- **Firefighter/Fire (Control) to Crew Manager/Crew Manager (Control)**
- **Watch Manager/Watch Manager (Control) to Station Manager/Station Manager (Control)**
- **Group to Area Manager**

To do so, an individual must:

- be receiving competent pay in their current role
- have undertaken an Individual Performance and Development Review (IPDR) with their line manager
- through the IPDR, have gained their manager's support for their application to enter the Assessment and Development Centre (ADC) process
- be successful at the relevant level ADC process
- undertake a practical exercise

2) The second process relates to those wishing to progress within the management band of management, e.g.:

- **Crew Manager/Crew Manager (Control) to Watch Manager/Watch Manager (Control)**
- **Station to Group Manager**

To do so, an individual must:

- be receiving competent pay in their current role
- have undertaken an Individual Performance and Development Review (IPDR) with their line manager
- through the IPDR, have gained their manager's support for their application to enter into the interview process for promotion
- be successful at the interview process
- undertake a professional discussion and/or practical exercise

A separate process exists for those wishing to move from Area to Brigade Manager

## Assessment and Development Centres (ADCs)

**For full details see Brigade Order Training No. 5 part 4**

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service are committed to the development of all staff and will support participation in appropriate training and development programmes, whether internally or externally provided.

In line with the National Framework document and Fire Service Circular 09/2004, Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service apply the Personal Quality and Attributes standards and Assessment and Development Centre processes for the basis of developing staff in readiness for managerial roles.

Each operational role within the Fire and Rescue Service is related to a set of competences. The National Framework interprets the word 'competence' in terms of Personal Qualities and Attributes. There are 11 PQAs, grouped into four areas:

- **Personal Style**
- **Interpersonal Skills**
- **Working with Information**
- **Organisational Effectiveness**

It is this framework against which assessment takes place at an ADC.

The National ADC process is not a selection tool or a test of operational competence. Both stages of the ADC are designed to measure generic management skills required for a future role which have been identified from specific job analysis, and assessment is made against clearly defined behavioural standards (PQAs).

To access different bands of management, the following levels of Assessment and Development Centres are applicable:

Supervisory Level	Crew Manager Watch Manager
Middle Manager Level	Station Manager Group Manager
Strategic Manager Level	Area

When planning ADCs, places available to participants are established based entirely upon succession planning. Succession planning also applies to the number of places offered on formal development programmes (covered in the next section).

Those who are offered places will be expected to begin their formal programme within 18 months of the ADC process. If unable to do so, it will be necessary to undertake the ADC again, not less than 12 months following their last ADC.

## Practical Assessment/Simulation Exercise

As mentioned above, the National ADC process does not assess operational competence. In order to address this, Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service operate an operational assessment process which comprises a practical assessment and theory exercise or simulation exercise, dependent upon role. As with the people management aspects of the ADC process, the operational phase will help form the basis of an individual development programme. Practice sessions for those undertaking practical exercises will be offered to candidates taking part and theoretical questions will be based on the Operations in the Community NVQ Level 3.

## Acting up

**For full details see Brigade Order HR No. 3 Part 5**

From time to time, it is necessary to provide operational cover by requesting suitable individuals to act up to the next role. As it is impossible to ensure that all those who wish to apply for a place at an ADC have an opportunity to act up, it will not be considered as a means for development in order to improve performance at an ADC. However, it should enhance an individual's capability to apply and carry out the policies and procedures of the organisation and help build experience of command at operational incidents.

Full details of the approach to selecting individuals for acting up/temporary promotions can be found in the Brigade Order mentioned above.

## Post ADC Formal Development (Supervisory and Middle Manager Development Programmes SMDP/MMDP)

For full details see Brigade Order Training No. 5 Part 5

**Formal** development programmes should not be confused with **workplace** development programmes (covered in another section). Formal development programmes are designed to provide skills across a broad range of subjects, including people and operational skills, some of which will be delivered by external providers, including the Fire Service College.

The programmes have been developed through regional collaboration and are mapped against the national development modules database. The majority of subjects will be delivered over a period of time, ideally 18 months, with other local aspects being delivered over a longer period of time, dependent upon availability of staff to attend. Whilst every effort will be made to ensure programmes are delivered within the ideal period and prior to selection, it will not always be possible to do so as operational crewing levels will always take precedence. However, all operationally risk critical training will be given priority.

The key subject areas contained within the formal development programmes are listed in the Brigade Order mentioned above. Local Service specific development activities will also be included in the development programme.

## Selection

Individuals who have been successful at the ADC and operational assessment phase are eligible to apply for vacancies appropriate to the level at which they have shown potential. Each selection process will take a different format, dependent upon role being applied for. In the case of supervisory roles, this will normally be a role specific interview.

# Workplace Development Programmes

**For full details see Brigade Order No. 5 Part 6**

Workplace Development Programmes are currently in place for Crew/Watch/Station and Group manager levels and reflect each of the relevant role maps. In order to be paid competent rate of pay following substantive promotion, it is necessary to successfully complete a workplace development programme.

The programmes are designed to support a line manager to make assessment judgements on the level of competence of a member of their team when they move into a new role.

The minimum time attached to the programme is 6 months, and the maximum is 18 months, as per Grey Book Conditions of Service. Appropriate progress and completion of the process will form one of the aspects considered by line managers when confirming the individual's eligibility for CPD in their new role.

The programmes reflect the activities in a new role and are mapped against the national occupational standards within the specified role map. The visible layout has been based upon the fire fighter development programme, but is designed to be much less onerous, does not provide an NVQ and does not require the production of a large portfolio. These programmes meet the requirements of NJC 09/2005 relating to competent pay and require external audit.

The line manager uses this programme to assess the performance of the individual and the quality assurance process of the programme is carried out by designated members of the Development Team. Once the programme has been deemed successfully completed, the Development Manager will be responsible for advising the Human Resources Manager that the appropriate level of competent pay should take effect. Applications to the next level of management will not be accepted from individuals who are still receiving development pay in their current role.

## Workplace Development Programme FAQs

- 1. How long will I have to complete the programme?**  
Up to 18 months and a minimum of six months.
- 2. What happens if I lose time through circumstances beyond my control?**  
There is flexibility to take this into account so that you are not penalised.
- 3. If I cannot get the evidence for some units/elements because it's not part of my role, what should I do?**  
Seek help and support from your manager. It may be possible to set up some activities (eg simulation) or project work. There will be a mechanism to ensure you will not be penalised. Any units not completed should be fulfilled when you take up a post where this is possible. (Note: operational units are mandatory and the requirements will be detailed for each role.)

- 5. How much evidence do I need to provide?**  
Sufficient to fulfil the requirements of each unit/element – quality, not quantity – guidance will be provided.
- 6. I completed FF1 and FF8 as part of the FF Development Programme – do I need to do them again as a Crew Manager?**  
No, provided you can demonstrate you have maintained your competence and your manager confirms this.
- 7. Can I collect evidence for the Watch Manager units not included in the Crew Manager rolemap and have these units assessed?**  
You may collect evidence, but the units will not be assessed until you have moved into a Watch Manager role. Therefore you are advised only to collect evidence that is likely to remain current. This evidence will then be assessed by your new line manager.
- 8. Do I need to complete my development programme prior to applying for a vacancy at the next level?**  
Yes – advertisements for vacancies will state which people can apply (eg “applications are invited from fully competent, substantive...”)
- 9. Will it be possible to move sideways prior to completion of my development programme?**  
Yes – dependent on local needs – criteria will be stated in the advertisement.
- 10. Who do I contact if I wish to appeal or I am in dispute with my Assessor?**  
A member of the QA team.

## Useful Documents for Further Reference

Brigade Orders viewed through Brigade\_Info on SY12

Role Maps

National Occupational Standards

Personal Qualities and Attributes

Fire Service Development Modules

NJC Pay Agreement

Most of these documents can be viewed through various websites, including:

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service - [www.shropshirefire.gov.uk](http://www.shropshirefire.gov.uk)

Fire Service College - [www.fireservicecollege.ac.uk](http://www.fireservicecollege.ac.uk)

Fire Brigades Union - [www.fbu.org.uk](http://www.fbu.org.uk)

To: **Development Manager**  
**Learning and Development Centre**

From: .....

**CAREER DEVELOPMENT BOOKLET**

I have the following comments to make about the Career Development Booklet which you may wish to consider when carrying out a review:

I have found the least useful areas to be:

I have found the most useful areas to be:

It would be useful if you could include more information on:

Signed: .....

Date: .....

