

Wholetime and Retained Duty System Performance Monitoring April to July 2018

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

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1 Purpose of Report

This report provides information regarding the ongoing performance and management in terms of the availability of wholetime and Retained Duty System appliances in Shropshire.

2 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the contents of the report.

3 Background

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) has 23 fire stations, 19 of which are solely crewed by Retained Duty System (RDS) staff, and a further 3 stations have both a wholetime and RDS complement. Only Telford Central Fire Station is solely crewed by wholetime firefighters.

It is worthy of note that a number of wholetime and on call firefighters supported the national response to the moorland fires on Winter Hill in Lancashire recently. Mixed crews and supporting Officers were deployed to the scene of operations for up to 24 hour periods with logistics being supported by the Technical Services team providing transport, kit and equipment.

This has been an exceptionally challenging time for the Service given the risks to rural areas from the recent hot weather and the water shortages reported by Severn Trent.

Despite these challenges, the men and women who work both duty systems and provide the support services have risen to the challenge to not only support our colleagues in the North of England but also ensure that every contingency plan for the Shropshire countryside has been reviewed.

4 Wholetime Availability Update

Availability of wholetime appliances remains at 100%.

Wholetime crews continue to provide an increased level of resilience across the specialist operational areas of the Service, including Breathing Apparatus guidelines, enhanced water rescue, Rope access and stabilisation, Aerial Ladder Platform, Rescue Tender, Immediate Emergency Care, Animal Rescue and the Firefighter Assistance and Safety Team (FAST).

The Integrated Crewing Model (IRMP1) was implemented in January 2017. Throughout 2017 and into 2018 the Fire Service Rota model has developed into a smoother and more effective tool in managing wholetime staff and appliance availability. Further refinements are in progress to enable intuitive and, in some cases, automatic recognition of shortfalls and notification to staff via the mobile app. This will ensure a far more responsive solution to covering shortfalls and ensuring appliance availability.

5 Retained Duty System Performance

Overall availability of RDS fire appliances from April through to the end of June 2018 is **97.29%**. Recruitment remains a constant challenge for station management teams and the Group Support Team and the process is constant and ongoing in order to maintain these levels.

Support continues at Minsterley (82.64% available) and Albrighton (93.35% available), however, these figures represent steady improvement for both stations.

The table below shows stations who are performing very well and have required little or no support from the Group Support Teams.

No Group Support Team (GST) support and maintained 100% availability	Stations performing above the service average (96%) and had less than 10 hours GST support in the quarter
Craven Arms Church Stretton Ellesmere Ludlow Wem	Bridgnorth Bishops Castle Cleobury Mortimer Clun Hodnet Much Wenlock Newport Oswestry Shrewsbury Whitchurch

The Retained Support Officers (RSO) provided a total of 1105 hours of support across all RDS stations during the reporting period April to end of June 2018.

All stations should be congratulated on maintaining a very high availability percentage especially during the last few months when a significant number of RDS staff have left the Service or changed their availability after joining the Defence Fire Risk Management Organisation (DFRMO) following their large recruitment campaign. When compared to other Services across the United Kingdom, SFRS continue to lead the way in terms of availability of on call appliances.

To improve on the overall level of performance, the Service remains focused on those fire appliances / stations that are currently failing to meet the Service average. An outline of the factors affecting availability and the actions to improve performance is in the next section.

6 Background Station Specific Performance

Improvements in availability have been demonstrated at Cleobury Mortimer following successful recruitment and completion of development programmes. Albrighton have also demonstrated an improved direction of travel with availability increasing over the quarter to an impressive 98.23% in the month of June.

7 Recruitment Campaign

Recruitment is a constant work stream for the Area Command teams but a number of stations, including Minsterley and Albrighton, are currently engaging with their local communities through specific recruitment initiatives, such as careers evenings with partners, which are being held during this period. In addition, Assistant Group Commanders for the three districts in Shropshire are prioritizing two stations for recruitment initiatives in order to ensure the correct mix of recruits attending initial training courses.

For 2018 the service will continue to hold a minimum of three under-represented group taster sessions.

All aspects of the recruitment campaign, including the use of social media networking as a method of attraction, continue to impact positively on the Service's desire to achieve 100% availability.

In June 2018 the Service Management Team approved a paper outlining how an On Call Sustainability Project will be carried out in 2018/19. This project will involve extensive consultation with our On-Call fighters looking to the ever changing future of our rural communities and how we can best support their needs and maintain our high appliance availability.

A Home Office national On-Call Firefighter recruitment campaign has been designed through the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) On-Call Firefighters practitioner group. This campaign is due to launch mid-August 2018 and will provide a standard approach and include television advertisements, social media “stings” and a specific outline brand that can be readily and easily associated with on call firefighters.

The Service held open days at its 3 Wholetime stations in 2017 and intends on doing the same for 2018. RDS recruitment information has been available at all of these with a number of people expressing an interest.

Positive action taster days have been scheduled for the next three years; an initiative driven by our Equality and Diversity Department and Steering Group.

8 Retained Support Officer (RSO) Cover

The deployment of RSOs during April to the end of June was again significant in supporting availability at Minsterley, they have also supported Albrighton, Bishops Castle, Cleobury Mortimer, Wellington, Oswestry, Tweedale and Market Drayton during this last quarter.

9 Availability System

The Fire Service Rota (FSR) system, which has been implemented into the Wholetime Crewing System, has recently been introduced for RDS stations. It has been modified and piloted at Craven Arms Fire Station initially with two members of staff acting as “super users”.

There are clear benefits to adopting FSR across the On Call area of the Service. As well as bringing all response staff onto one system, FSR will allow individual On Call staff easier management of their availability by utilising a smartphone app. The system will also greatly assist in the management of RDS staff by providing instant, accurate and up to date availability of staff and appliances.

The Service is currently working with FSR, Telford and Wrekin Council and Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service in developing the system by removing the current paper-based forms used for performance management and pay purposes.

10 Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

11 Legal Comment

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

12 Initial Impact Assessment

This report contains merely statements of fact / historical data. An Initial Impact Assessment is not, therefore, required.

13 Appendix

Retained Duty System Fire Station Availability Analysis

14 Background Papers

A quarterly RDS performance review summary is presented to the Fire Authority's Audit and Performance Management Committee. Previous reports can be accessed via the following link:

<http://www.shropshirefire.gov.uk/managing-service/fra/meetings>

Retained Duty System Fire Station Availability: Analysis

In the following tables one (1) unit is equivalent to one person being available for full cover (i.e. over 120 hours a week). Two crew members each committing three quarter cover (i.e. up to 120 hours, but no less than 84 hours per week) would equate to 1.5 units.

This quarter the following stations have been selected for comparison:

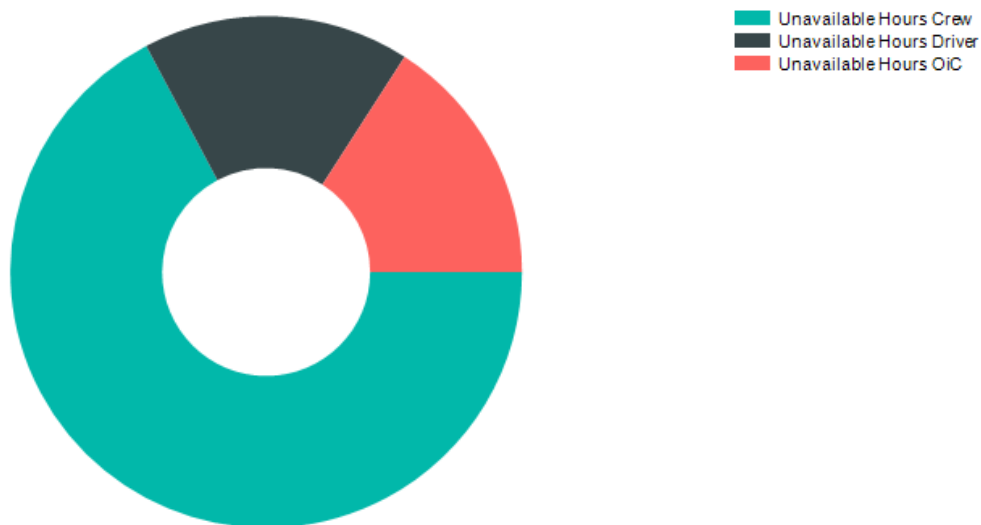
- Minsterley.
- Albrighton.
- Cleobury Mortimer.

Please note that there is an error on the graphs that show Monthly Availability. The black bar on these graphs denotes Unavailable Hours.

Overall RDS availability

Financial Year 2018/19 to date								
Availability		Hours 09 to 18		Hours 18 to 09		Weekdays 09 - 18		RSO
Hours	%	Hours	%	Hours	%	Hours	%	Days, Hours, Minutes
51,586	97.88	18,818	95.21	32,768	99.48	13,233	93.89	0 Mins

Total Unavailability: 2.43% (1280.25Hrs)



Financial Year 2018 - Monthly Availability



Minsterley

Financial Year 2018/19 to date									
Availability		Hours 09 to 18		Hours 18 to 09		Weekdays 09 - 18		RSO	
Hours	%	Hours	%	Hours	%	Hours	%	Days, Hours, Minutes	
2,449	83.64	688	62.64	1,761	96.24	378	48.21	0 Mins	

Station profile	Reason for availability issues	Actions taken
13 units available 9 units filled 12 personnel	Shortage of personnel, Drivers and Level 1 commanders, cover presents a challenge	Targeted Recruitment ongoing. Staff put forward for driving and incident command courses.

Albrighton

Financial Year 2018/19 to date									
Availability		Hours 09 to 18		Hours 18 to 09		Weekdays 09 - 18		RSO	
Hours	%	Hours	%	Hours	%	Hours	%	Days, Hours, Minutes	
2,733	93.35	952	86.73	1,781	97.32	691	88.19	0 Mins	

Station profile	Reason for availability issues	Actions taken
13 units available 10.5 units filled 12 personnel	Small shortage of staff.	Ongoing recruitment in place

Cleobury Mortimer

Financial Year 2018/19 to date									
Availability		Hours 09 to 18		Hours 18 to 09		Weekdays 09 - 18		RSO	
Hours	%	Hours	%	Hours	%	Hours	%	Days, Hours, Minutes	
2,867	97.91	1,040	94.74	1,827	99.81	730	93.23	0 Mins	

Station profile	Reason for availability issues	Actions taken
13 units available 12 units filled 14 personnel	Most staff are community based rural workers with little or no new housing developments in the area.	RSOs have traditionally covered the shortfall during this period however recruitment and staff moving out of development have improved the availability dramatically.