

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service

Equality Impact Assessment

Title of policy:	
Department:	
Date:	23.2.2011

You identified this policy as needing a full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA). You should complete sections 1 – 5 below (where appropriate) before sending to DiversityTeam@merseyfire.gov.uk for inclusion on the next DAG meeting agenda.

<p>1: Identify the aims and purpose of the policy</p> <p><i>This should identify "the legitimate aim" of the policy (there may be more than one)</i></p>
<p>The purpose of this EIA is to consider the reduction in the number of Station Managers/Group Manager (GM/SM) whilst maintaining an appropriate number (4 x SM; 2 x GM) for incident command purpose as part of meeting the Authority saving targets.</p>
<p>2: Identify the individuals and organisations who are likely to have an interest in, or be affected by the policy.</p> <p><i>This should identify the persons/organisations who may need to be consulted about the policy or procedure and its outcomes (There may be more than one)</i></p>
<p>Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority Executive Leadership Team Corporate Leadership Team Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service FBU/FOA</p>

3. Monitoring

Summarise the findings of any monitoring data you have considered regarding this policy. This could include data which shows whether the policy is having the desired outcomes and also its impact on members of different equality groups.

4: Research

Summarise the findings of any research you have considered regarding this policy. This could include quantitative data and qualitative information; anything you have obtained from other sources e.g. CFOA/CLG guidance, other FRSs, etc

A previous report to the Authority (CFO/219/05) detailed an analysis of senior officer provision for incident command purposes and concluded, in relation to GMs and SM, there should be a provision of 2 GMs and 4 SMs as appropriate for reasonably foreseeable incidents. The assumptions made in that report have been revisited through a Risk Assessment which highlighted the risk factors that determine the number of officers available for incident command have actually reduced. There were no specific equality and diversity issues raised through this. Appendix B is a report which shows the minimum number of covers a SM or GM are required to cover, the number of occasions where a shortfall might occur and the options available for consideration to cover the shortfalls.

5. Consultation

Summarise the opinions of any consultation. Who was consulted and how? (This should include reference to people and organisations identified in section 2 above) Outline any plans to inform consultees of the results of the consultation

Attempts are being made with the rep bodies to move to one self-rostering system, as we are asking fire station based staff to do. Within the officer group a number of officers have been working a self rostering system since summer 2009. Not all officers are currently self rostering although they are working flexibly. For planning purposes we are assuming that the two systems of rostering (self rostering and the traditional system) will remain in place.

Consultation has also taken place with GM's/SM's directly.

6. Conclusions

Taking into account the results of the monitoring, research and consultation, set out how the policy impacts or could impact on people from the following protected groups? (Include positive and/or negative impacts)

6.1 Age: N/A

The proposed changes to ensure continued provision of cover for incident command purposes will have no impact on Age considerations.

6.2 Disability: N/A

The proposed changes to ensure continued provision of cover for incident command purposes will have no impact on Disability considerations.

6.3 Gender: Yes

The proposed changes to ensure continued provision of cover for incident command purposes will mean there is a fairer distribution of hours and flexibility. This will lead to an increase in choice and flexibility for people to manage their own time and commitments.

For both male and female staff who may have children, family commitments or have caring responsibilities the proposal will further support them in this aspect and allow greater flexibility for them to effectively manage their own time. This less rigid system proposed will actually provide additional support and accommodate those with such caring responsibilities even further due to the flexibility in hours and approach of the organisation.

6.4 Race: N/A

The proposed changes to ensure continued provision of cover for incident command purposes will have no impact on Race considerations.

6.5 Religion or Belief: Yes

The proposed changes will allow an individual greater flexibility which will in fact positively impact on them and allow the organisation to be more accommodating to their religious needs. Staff from different religious backgrounds will be able to flexibly practice their beliefs, customs and faiths, utilising this less rigid system, if they should wish.

6.6 Sexual Orientation: N/A

The proposed changes to ensure continued provision of cover for incident command purposes will have no impact on Sexual Orientation considerations.

7. Decisions

If the policy will have a negative impact on members of one or more of the protected groups, explain how the policy will change or why it is to continue in the same way. If no changes are proposed, the policy needs to be objectively justified as being an appropriate and necessary means of achieving the legitimate aim set out in 1 above.

The grant received by MFRS has been significantly reduced by the Government and we are one of the worst affected of any fire and rescue service in the country – a 13 % cut over the next two years. This has obviously had a significant impact on service planning both for the short and also for longer term. The Authority’s budget proposal includes £400k savings in management costs. Authority Members have assumed cuts in the numbers of GMs and SMs will contribute to this saving along with other cuts in management numbers.

These proposals maintain appropriate incident command cover but the managerial impact will require the Chief Fire Officer to make a number of organisational structure changes.

While it remains that currently some officers will not self roster within the officer group the full benefits of self rostering will not immediately impact on all officers who are. However by a natural turnover of officers in the group over coming years the benefits will increase as individuals moving into the group will be required to self roster.

8. Equality Improvement Plan

List any changes to our policies or procedures that need to be included in the Equality Action Plan/Service Plan.

Action Planned	Responsibility of	Completed by