



Service Policy EMPPOL06
Operational Assurance Policy

“An Excellent Authority”

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Document Control

Active date	Review date	Department	Author	Editor	Publisher
18.3.08	01/04/2011	Performance and Values	AM Stephens	DCFO Hagen	Jeff Edwards

Legislation

Title	
Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004	N/A

Amendment History

Version	Date	Author	Reasons for Change
0.1	21.1.08	AM Stephens	Initial Draft
1.0	19.2.08	AM Stephens	Comments from DCFO Hagen
1.1	18.3.09	AM Case	Policy review
1.2	26.2.10	AM Stephens	Policy review
1.2	01.4.11	Brian Welsh	Policy review
1.3	13.09.11	GM Howard	Policy Review

Equalities Impact Assessment

Initial	Full	Date	Reviewed by	Comments
✓		08/02/2008	AM Stephens	

Civil Contingencies Impact Assessment

Date	Reviewed by	Comments

Related Policies

Title	Author	Department
Operational Training Policy Operational Planning Policy	AM Stephens	Safety Culture and Compliance

Distribution List

Name	Position	I/R

Sign-Off List

Name	Position

Related Documents

Ref No.	Title	Author	Version & Date
SI 0176	Operational Performance Audit		
SI 0503	Station Training Programme		

SI 0207	Training for Operational Competence		
SI 0069	Debriefing Operational Incidents		
SI 0023	Procedures for the Investigation of Accidents and Near Misses		

Target audience

All MFS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ops Crews		Fire safety		Community FS		Civilian Staff	
Principal off.		Senior off.		etc		etc		etc	

Ownership

Publicly owned document	Yes	X	URL	
	No		Reason	

Introduction

It is the policy of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (MFRA) to conduct operational assurance audits at training events, exercises and operational incidents in accordance with the model outlined in the HSE publication HSG 65 'Successful Health and Safety Management'.

Training needs identified during audits are used to inform monthly Service wide audit themes in order to ensure that the highest standards of operational competence and safety of personnel is continually maintained.

The policy is augmented by the Service Instructions (SI's) which appertains to on station training, operational planning, debriefing operational incidents and for the investigation of accidents and near misses.

Policy Explanation

Operational assurance is provided by sector competent Managers who attend operational incidents, exercises and training events. The role of the Manager conducting the audit is to assess operational performance and when attending a training event or exercise to confirm that training needs identified from previous audits and the learning outcomes detailed in the Service training modules are achieved.

Operational assurance visits will be conducted by sector competent Managers to assess performance against foundation skills. The visits take the form of an Operational Assurance Audit (OPARA) which considers a number of set criteria against standard practices and techniques. The sector competent Manager will feed back any identified development needs to the Watch Manager and will complete the on-line audit within the OSHENS system.

A regular review of all audits is undertaken by Managers from Operational Readiness and Operational Preparedness, in order to identify underlying issues of a risk critical nature. Where issues are identified these are addressed by the relevant sector competent Managers.

A similar process is applied at operational incidents and tactical exercises, the outcomes of which are captured on an Operational Performance Audit (OPERA) form, which is also held on the OSHENS system. The OPERA is laid out in a logical, progressive sequence and reflects the systems, procedures and practices developed under the 'Safe Person Concept' which is accepted as the key to the safe and competent command of operational incidents (Fire Service Manual Volume 2 Incident Command 3rd Edition).

The OPERA forms completed at an incident are used to inform any structured debrief that follows in accordance with the procedures for debriefing operational incidents. Identified outcomes from the Debrief, OPERA and OPARA processes are then addressed by the relevant sector competent Manager.

Policy Implementation

This policy will be implemented by means of the application of all relevant Standard Operational Procedures (SOP) and SI's.

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- Deleted: two weekly
- Deleted: the Health and Safety Manager, the Training Manager and the Performance and Values Manager
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- Deleted: OPARA
- Deleted: is a monthly standing item on the District Management Team (DMT) meeting chaired by the Director of Performance and Values
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¶ Where a training need is identified, this is set as the monthly Service wide OPARA theme. The Director of Performance and Values communicates the theme to Watch Managers one month in advance in order for the underpinning knowledge packages held on Learn Pro to be factored into the training forecast. This process operates in parallel with the process outlined within Service Instruction (SI) Station Training Programme.
- Deleted:
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- Deleted: <#>SI Operational Performance Audit¶
<#>SI Station Training Programme¶
<#>SI Training for Operational Competence¶
<#>SI Debriefing Operational Incidents¶
<#>SI Procedures for the Investigation of Accidents and Near Misses¶