



“An Excellent Authority”

Service Policy **RESOURCE INTENSIVE & VEXATIOUS CUSTOMER POLICY**

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Document Control

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Legislation

Title	N/A	N/A

Amendment History

Version	Date	Author	Reasons for Change

Equalities Impact Assessment

Initial	Full	Date	Reviewed by	Comments
	x	September 2011	Diversity Manager, SMG	

Civil Contingencies Impact Assessment

Date	Reviewed by	Comments

Related Policies

Title	Author	Department

Distribution List

Name	Position	I/R

Sign-Off List

Name	Position
	Strategic Management Group

Related Documents

Ref No.	Title	Author	Version & Date
To be allocated after approval	Resource Intensive and Vexatious customer SI	Director of Strategic Planning	November 2011

Target audience

All MFS	x	Ops Crews	Fire safety	Community FS	Support Staff
Principal off.		Senior off.	etc	etc	etc

Ownership

FOI exemption required?	Yes	URL
	No	x Reason

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY RESOURCE INTENSIVE & VEXATIOUS CUSTOMER POLICY

Introduction

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service is committed to providing good quality, value for money services to our service users and customers in an efficient and courteous way. We want to make sure that we manage our services and resources in an equitable way. This Policy sets out our intentions and the associated Service Instruction details how we will do this in relation to providing effective management of customer contact which is disproportionate to the issues raised or compared to that of other customers.

We accept that some customers may act out of character in times of trouble or distress and that this may be a result of them being particularly vulnerable. There may have been upsetting or distressing circumstances leading up to them contacting us. This Policy and Service Instruction aim to distinguish between this type of behaviour and behaviour which is aggressive, places unreasonable demands on us, is vexatious or where contact is persistent.

When deciding if a customer is to be managed under this Policy and Service Instruction we will use all information that we have to help assist us in making the decision. Evidence rather than anecdotal information will form the basis of the decision to manage a customer under the instruction. Only when all avenues and options have been exhausted should we consider the customer under this instruction.

For the purpose of the Policy and Service Instruction the term customer is used to describe an individual, a group of individuals or an organisation.

Aims and Key Objectives

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service will invoke its Resource Intensive and Vexatious Customer Service Instruction to deal effectively and efficiently with particular types of customer. This includes-

- Identifying situations where a customer might be considered under this Service Instruction and apply judgment and discretion to deciding what course of action is followed;
- Ensuring that the Service Instruction is used as a last resort, after all reasonable measures have been taken;
- Ensuring the Service Instruction is only implemented with the authorisation of a Director.

Definitions

This Service Instruction covers four definitions:-

- Vexatious complainers;
- Persistent complainers;
- Resource intensive customers;
- Abusive customers.

There are very few customers who will be managed under this Policy and Service Instruction. **However**, in identifying a customer we will evidence where the workload created by a customer is having a negative effect on the relevant service area, their ability to deal with other customers and their performance.

Before invoking the Service Instruction, staff will try to resolve matters by meeting personally with the customer or their advocates to determine the key issues that the customer is experiencing.

A key factor to be taken into account however is the customer's vulnerability. A customer may suffer from a mental or physical disability which may be contributing to behaviour we consider to be vexatious, persistent or resource intensive. In this situation **we will** identify what support is being provided or can be offered to help the customer.

Customers will be given the opportunity to explain their feelings whilst also being advised of our intentions to conclude the matter to their satisfaction. Where this fails and the customer's behaviour does not modify, the Service Instruction procedure will begin.