

AGENDA ITEM:

REPORT TO:	MERSEYSIDE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
DATE:	4th OCTOBER 2012
REPORT NO.	CFO/129/12
REPORTING OFFICER:	CHIEF FIRE OFFICER
CONTACT OFFICER:	CHIEF FIRE OFFICER
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	AM SEARLE OPERATIONAL PREPAREDNESS AM HOWARD CFOA
SUBJECT:	OPERATIONAL POLICY REVIEW

THERE ARE APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

APPENDIX	A	TITLE	OPERATIONAL PLANNING POLICY
	B		OPERATIONAL TRAINING POLICY

ATTACHED – HARD COPY

Purpose of Report

1. To advise Members of the review of the Operational Planning and Operational Training Policies.

Recommendation

2. That Members approve the changes made to the Operational Planning and Operational Training Policies.

Introduction & Background

3. All Authority policies are subject to annual review. It is also appropriate to review policies in the event of any changes, which may impact on the policy, such as changes in national operational guidance and methodology.
4. As of November 2011 the three Emergency Services have been working to a Ministerial group chaired by the Home Secretary on Blue Light Interoperability. At a meeting between the respective Ministers, Cabinet Office and the three professional associations, (CFOA, Association of Chief Police Officers and Association of Ambulance Chief Executives) a governance structure and work programme for improving interoperability at complex incidents was agreed. It was recognised that there was already very good interoperability between the emergency services but that improvements needed to be made to the

understanding of command and Standard Operational Procedures (SOP's) at more complex incidents.

5. Within the Fire and Rescue Service the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser has chaired the Operational Guidance Programme Board (OGPB), administered by DCLG, to engage stakeholders in the production of Fire Service Operational Guidance since the removal of the Inspectorate. This process is now in transition to a CFOA/Local Government Association (LGA) led process, programme managed by London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority. A new Operational Guidance Strategic Board has been established to provide strategic oversight of the efficient production, authorisation and publication of national operational guidance for the Fire and Rescue Service in England ('the Service'), in line with the priorities of the Service and on advice from the wider sector. The CFOA National Operations Committee (NOC) is a key stakeholder on the Board.
6. It is recognised within the NOC that it is necessary to develop National SOP's in order to achieve intraoperability between Fire and Rescue Services.
7. Members will be aware that Merseyside SOP's have been adopted across the North West region after being recognised as representing best practice. The South East region has also developed regional SOP's which although being broadly similar in content to the North West version utilise a different indexing system and format.
8. In accordance with the extant Operational Planning Policy Merseyside/NW SOP's are indexed against the National Generic Risk Assessment (GRA) and formatted against the decision making model (i.e. Hazards and Control Measures followed by Incident Information, Hazards and Safety Information, Resources Information, Prioritise Incident Objectives, Plan, Communicate, Control and Review). South East SOP's are indexed against national incident types and formatted against the GRA (Hazards and Control Measures) followed by Actions and Further Considerations.
9. The South East Region recently submitted a bid to CLG for funding from the £1.8m RCC legacy budget to conclude the work on Regional SOP's for the South East. Merseyside FRS is completing the North West SOP work on behalf of the North West Region. Following discussions between the CFOA Director of Operations, the Chief Fire Officer and the South East region SOP lead this bid has been extended to include the integration and alignment of the South East and North West SOP's to produce a suite of National SOP's. The scope of the bid also includes funding to support a secondment of an Area Manager to lead the process.
10. Confirmation that the bid has been successful was given by Neil O'Connor in a letter to the South East region SOP's lead on 20th July.
11. As a result the Chief Fire Officer has agreed the terms of a secondment for Area Manager Howard to CFOA National Resilience Ltd (CNR) to manage and coordinate the project on behalf of the CFOA National Operations Committee

(NOC). Members should note that this affords Merseyside FRS the opportunity to significantly influence future national operational doctrine through the adoption of SOP's very much predicated on the model in use already within Merseyside.

12. In order to reflect the methodology being applied in the convergence of the existing Merseyside/NW SOP's with the South East Region SOP's it is necessary to make some slight amendments to the Operational Planning Policy. These amendments reflect the fact that the revised Merseyside/NW SOP's will also be developed against the generic incident types and will contain a task analysis, which will result in the identification of hazards, assessment of risk and the implementation of workplace precautions (control measures).
13. The review of the Operational Training Policy reflects the changes made to the Operational Planning Policy.
14. A copy of each policy, complete with tracked changes, is appended to this report.

Equality & Diversity Implications

15. Equality Impact Assessments have been undertaken on each Policy.

Staff Implications

16. None contained within this report.

Legal Implications

17. None contained within this report.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

18. None contained within this report.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

19. The safe systems of work detailed within each SOP are arrived at from a comprehensive task analysis which identifies all foreseeable hazards as contained in the national GRA. A related Learn Pro training package which confirms competence against pre determined learning outcomes has been developed for each SOP.
20. The principles contained within the two Policies under review accord directly with those contained within HSE publication HSG 65 Successful Health and Safety Management.

Contribution to Our Mission – To Achieve;_Safer Stronger Communities – Safe Effective Fire-fighters”

21. The Merseyside SOP's and related training packages are designed to meet the safety critical training and development needs of all staff, thus ensuring that all staff are equipped with the appropriate skills and knowledge to enable them to contribute to achieving the mission.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

***Glossary of Terms**

GRA – Generic Risk Assessment

Due to the size and nature of the activities undertaken by the FRS GRA's are produced to ensure a consistent approach in meeting regulatory requirements.

SOP – Standard Operational Procedures

An SOP contains any hazards, risks and control measures relating to the incident type and details the tactics and safe system of work to be employed at the incident.