

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

PERFORMANCE REPORT TO THE PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

19 MARCH 2015

SUBJECT: CROSS BORDER INCIDENTS MOBILISATION

REPORT NUMBER: CFO/017/15

APPENDICES: APPENDIX A: SECTION 13 & 16 AGREEMENT
APPENDIX B: STATION ACTIVITY DATA
APPENDIX C: CROSS BORDER ACTIVITY MAP
APPENDIX D: CROSS BORDER ACTIVITY DATA

REPORTING OFFICER: DCFO

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: AM DAVE MOTTRAM

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Purpose of Report

1. To advise of the impact on response times of cross border mobilisations by MFRS appliances.

Introduction and Background

2. As a direct consequence of Government budget cuts, the Authority approved the reduction in the number of operational fire appliances from 42 to 28 effective from 9th September 2013 (CFO/27/013 Operational Response Review refers). The Authority had previously introduced a 10 minute response standard to life risk incidents on 90% of occasions effective from April 2013 (LPI 137).
3. As part of their forward work plan for 2015 the Performance and Scrutiny Committee has requested information on the frequency of MFRA appliance response and attendance to incidents within neighbouring FRA's in order to establish if this has had a detrimental impact on performance or the achievement of the revised attendance standard.

Impact of Cross Border Mobilisations

4. In accordance with the Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004 (the Act) Section 13 and Section 16, the Authority has cross border arrangements in place with Lancashire, Greater Manchester and Cheshire Fire and Rescue Services. Full details of these arrangements and a specific agreement with Cheshire Fire and Rescue Authority are referenced in Appendix 1.
5. Since the reduction to 28 appliances MFRA have achieved the new response standard on 97.1% of occasions. (These figures are based upon 12 months response data from September 2013 to August 2014). Full details of performance against this response standard are available in CFO/105/14 10 Minute Response Performance.
6. In the same period (September 2013 to August 2014) MFRS has responded over the border into neighboring counties under Section 13/16 agreements on 76 occasions.
7. Of these 76 incidents, MFRS assets were involved in operational activity on 43 occasions, of which 36 involved firefighting, 6 road traffic collisions and 1 rescue from height. 33 of the mobilizations did not require any operational intervention.
8. Out of the 76 incidents, 19 were attendances to Neston, which is an area ceded to MFRA for response by Cheshire FRS (identified in the Section 13/16 agreement Appendix 1).
9. The MFRA stations which predominantly provide over border response are placed in the lower performance range when we consider their activity against LPI 137. Operational utilization rates (i.e. the amount of time that crews spend engaged at operational incidents) at these stations are currently between 5-8%. With relatively low operational utilization rate at these stations the requirement to cover neighboring counties is being absorbed and at this time is having no significant detrimental impact on MFRA attendance standards. Full details of station activity against LPI 137 are detailed in Appendix 2.
10. As a comparison, neighboring counties mobilizing cross border into Merseyside are requested on a less frequent basis with MFRA requiring assistance on only seven occasions in 2013/14. Six of these were from Lancashire, to the Southport/North Merseyside area, and one from Cheshire into the area ceded by MFRA to Cheshire around Cronton. This number is expected to increase when the Prescot merger is completed.
11. Appendix 3 provides a map view of all cross border mobilizations for the year 2013/14 which identifies that the majority of our over border incidents are close to the Merseyside county boundary. Consequently MFRA appliances do not have prolonged travel distances which would extend their overall time commitment to these incidents.

12. All cross border mobilization figures for the past 3 years are detailed in Appendix 4.

National Resilience deployments

13. MFRS provide support for UK National Resilience and hold Urban Search & Rescue, High Volume Pump, DIM Vehicle and flood response assets the latter of which operate under DEFRA FRNE arrangements. These assets were mobilized out of Merseyside on 9 occasions during 2013/14 with these incidents generally being of a protracted nature.
14. MFRS USAR assets also form part of the International Search & Rescue (ISAR) Team and our personnel deployed to an incident in Bosnia during May 2014 to assist with flood response in that area.

Performance

15. Performance within Merseyside against the 10 minute response target for life risk incidents has dropped marginally in the last 3 years from 98.2% to 97.1%. This drop must be viewed in the knowledge that the response standard was changed in April 2013 which marginally affects the overall comparison. Notwithstanding, this current performance remains high against the 90% target for LPI 137 and the small decrease which has occurred should be noted as happening during a period of significant appliance reductions and a prolonged period of industrial action. Report CFO/105/14 10 Minute Response Performance details the measures which are in place to robustly manage performance against LPI 137 to ensure the target is consistently achieved.
16. In comparing activity outside Merseyside, we reinforce out on far more occasions than we request assistance in. Timed operational activity to these incidents has increased by 51% in the last 12 months on the previous year although incident numbers are slightly down. When cross border mobilizations are considered alongside reduced fleet size, national resilience capability, ISAR deployments and industrial action resilience commitment, the small noted reduction in our performance standard to 97.1% is not directly attributable to over the border response.
17. All response activity is constantly reviewed to ensure adherence to attendance targets and to identify that no one element is having a detrimental impact.

Equality and Diversity Implications

18. EIA is not required for this report as it is a data analysis only.

Staff Implications

19. There are no staff implications as the report scrutinises cross border mobilisation figures.

Legal Implications

20. Section 13 of the Act obliges fire and rescue authorities to group together, so far as practicable, to provide mutual assistance.
21. Powers contained in section 16 of the Act provide fire and rescue authorities with the ability to enter into contractual arrangements with others (including other fire and rescue authorities) to provide services in the execution of their functions (covered by sections 6 to 9 and section 11).

Financial Implications & Value for Money

22. There are no financial implications from the detail within this report although appliance availability and numbers, which impact response times to LPI 137, are linked to the budget reduction the Authority is currently managing.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

23. MFRS has representation on the North West Fire and Rescue Service Working Groups to ensure all health & safety implications are accounted for when staff mobilise into neighbouring Services. This considers risk management structures and review of any conflicts between local SOP's.

Contribution to Our Mission: *Safer Stronger Communities – Safe Effective Firefighters*

24. The findings within this report provide evidence that the Service continues to fulfil the legislative requirements in relation to supporting neighbouring Services during times of financial austerity driven by central Government and demonstrates our ongoing commitment to delivering safer communities and safe effective firefighters.

Recommendation

25. That Members;
 - a) Scrutinise the information contained within this report which provides evidence that MFRS continue to support over border requests with the data demonstrating there is no significant information to indicate this activity impacts locally on performance against LPI 137.
 - and / or
 - b) Direct Officers to continually monitor over border incidents to ensure this activity does not impact locally on performance figures.
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BACKGROUND PAPERS

CFO/105/14	10 Minute Response Performance
CFO/027/13	Operational Response Review
CFO/038/14	Budget Resolution Transitional Response Arrangements – sequential appliance unavailability
CFO/110/13	Industrial Action Planning
CFO/023/14	MFRA National Deployments during the recent wide area flooding

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

DIM	D etection I dentification M onitoring
DEFRA	D epartment of E nvironment, F ood and R ural A ffairs
ISAR	I nternational S earch A nd R escue
SOP	S tandard O perational P rocedure

Appendix A

Section 13/16 Agreement with Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service

FIRST SCHEDULE

Part 1

The area of Merseyside to be covered by Cheshire is in column 1 and the proposed resources to be used for this function are in Column 2

Column 1 (Area)	Column 2 (Resources)
Cronton	1 pump

Part 2

The area of Cheshire to be covered by Merseyside is in column 1 and the proposed resources to be used for this function are in Column 2

Column 1 (Area)	Column 2 (Resources)
Burtonwood	1 pump
Collins Green	1 pump
Little Neston	1 pump
Neston	1 pump
Parkgate	1 pump
Hale	1 pump
Burton	1 pump

Note 1: The above response arrangements are intended to assist both (A) and (B) in order to provide an initial deployment plan for mobilising purposes. The actual resources which will be mobilised to an incident in either FRA area will be subject to a determination based upon the location and critical nature of the incident along with each FRA's resource availability, location and subsequent response timescales at the time of the incident.

Note 2: Relief crew arrangements will be subject to confirmation at the time of the incident. Such arrangements must be considerate of the possibility of stripping resources away from either FRA area.

Note 3: The above responses are only to Road traffic collisions (*persons trapped indicated*) Property fires i.e. building

Any '**Persons Reported/Trapped**' type incident

SECOND SCHEDULE

Part 1

Pursuant to S.16 of the 2004 Act, Cheshire agrees to provide the specialist rope rescue functions of Merseyside under the 2004 Act during the term, as follows:

- To respond as soon as reasonably practicable to all emergency calls received by Cheshire direct in respect of all parts of Merseyside's area using the Specialist Rope Rescue Team
- To provide reinforcement, or relief, of working specialist rope rescue teams as soon as reasonably practicable.

It is the responsibility of Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority to inform all regional Fire Service control centres that Cheshire Fire Service specialist rope rescue team is attending a protracted incident within Merseyside.

Part 2

Pursuant to S.16 of the 2004 Act, Merseyside agrees to provide the specialist rope rescue functions of Cheshire under the 2004 Act during the term, as follows:

- To respond as soon as reasonably practicable to all emergency calls received by Merseyside direct in respect of all parts of Cheshire's area using the Specialist Rope Rescue Team
- To provide reinforcement, or relief, of working specialist rope rescue teams as soon as reasonably practicable.

It is the responsibility of Cheshire Fire Authority to inform all regional Fire Service control centres that Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service specialist rope rescue team is attending a protracted incident within Cheshire.

THIRD SCHEDULE

Pursuant to S.16 of the 2004 Act, at Urban Search & Rescue (USAR) incidents, Merseyside agrees to provide USAR resources and personnel to assist Cheshire in discharging its functions under the 2004 Act during the term, as follows:

- To provide USAR resources and personnel as soon as reasonably practicable to all emergency calls received by Merseyside direct in respect of a USAR incident occurring in Cheshire's area.

The main functions of the USAR provision will be to:-

- Act as the interface to support the incident commander in establishing safe systems of work at incidents involving collapsed structures and heavy transport incidents.
- Ensure provision when required of a subject matter advisor to act as an interface between the incident commander and the USAR team leader.

It is the responsibility of Cheshire Fire Authority to inform all Regional and National Fire Service control centres that Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service are assisting with a protracted USAR incident within Cheshire.

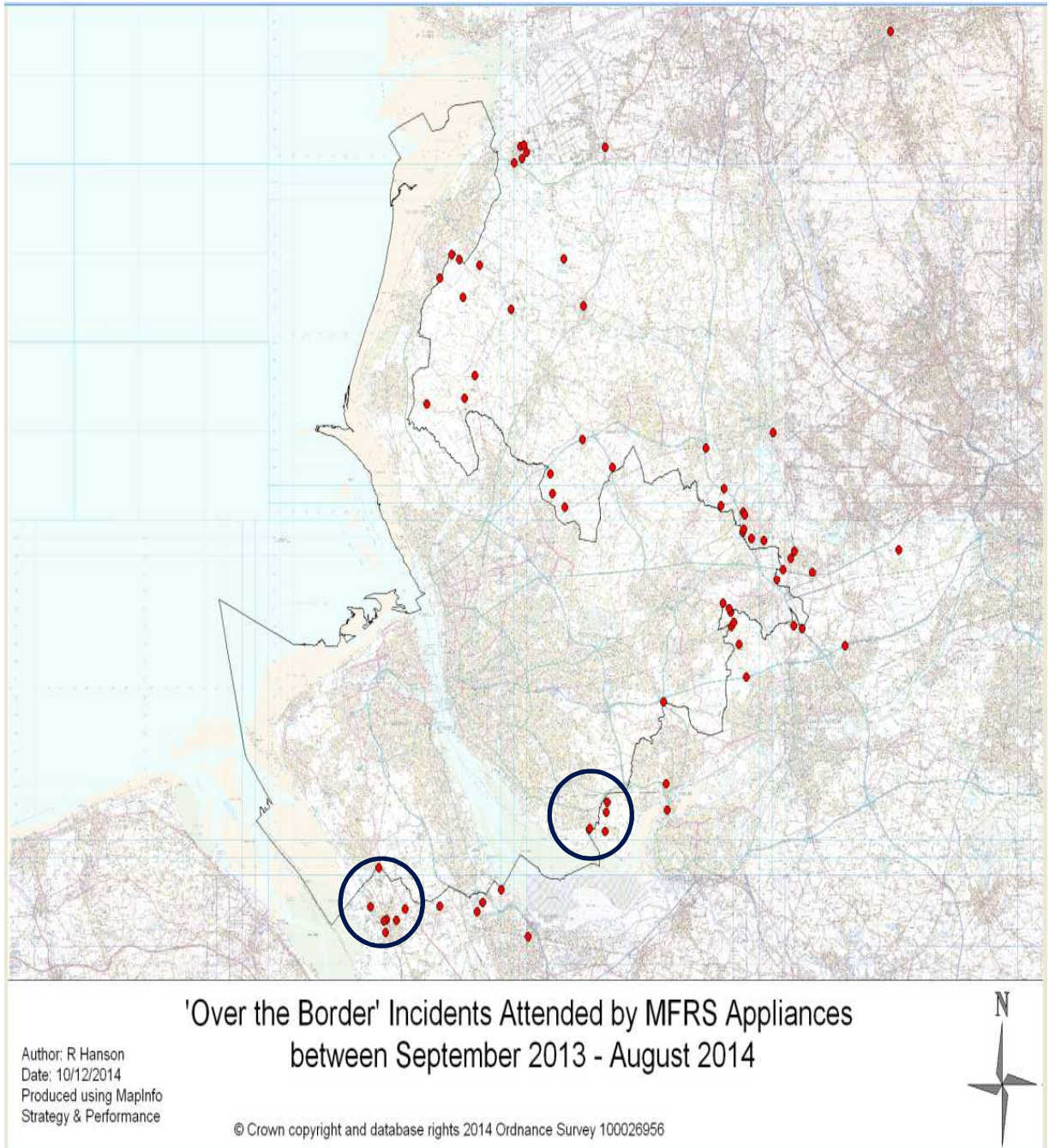
Appendix B

Station Activity against LPI 137 2013/14

Station	Total	Rank
City Centre	281	1
Birkenhead	274	2
Kensington	258	3
Wallasey	213	4
Aintree	213	5
Old Swan	197	6
Kirkdale	194	7
Croxteth	180	8
Toxteth	163	9
Upton	161	10
Bootle & Netherton	152	11
St Helens	149	12
Crosby	140	13
Allerton	135	14
Kirkdale Pump	127	15
Huyton	126	16
Eccleston	120	17
Kirkby	113	18
Whiston	103	19
Belle Vale	96	20
Southport	92	21
Bromborough	91	22
Speke	85	23
Newton le Willows	81	24
Old Swan Pump	68	25
Southport Pump	64	26
Formby	61	27
West Kirby	46	28
Heswall	40	29
City Centre Pump	6	30
Southport CPP	3	31
Wallasey Pump	1	32
Grand Total	4033	

Stations mainly affected by cross border activity are shaded blue

Appendix C



Ceded areas covered as part of the 13/16 agreement with Cheshire

Appendix D

Cross Border Incident Data

Over border incident count - MFRS appliances into neighbouring Service		
	Incidents	Total hours undertaking operational activity in neighbouring Service
Sept 13 - Aug 14	77	103.42
Sept 12 - Aug 13	82	68.2
Sept 11 - Aug 12	58	59.48
Total	217	231.1

Over border incident Count Section 13/16 Mobilisations - Cheshire Agreement		
	Total Incidents	Incidents when MFRS appliances engaged in operational activity
Sept 13 - Aug 14	19	11
Sept 12 - Aug 13	24	20
Sept 11 - Aug 12	10	5
Total	53	36

Neighbouring Fire Services Mobilising Cross Border into Merseyside							
	Sept 11 - Aug 12		Sept 12 - Aug 13		Sept 13 - Aug 14		
	Incidents	Cronton Area	Incidents	Cronton Area	Incidents	Cronton Area	Total
Cheshire	6	1	1	1	1	1	8
GMFRS	1	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	1
Lancashire	6	n/a	1	n/a	6	n/a	13
						Total	22