

Appendix A

Proposal For a combined Training Facility

A proposal for MFRA and MP to work collaboratively on using operational training facilities on stations in an innovative way to add value to both services.

Merseyside Fire and Rescue (MFRA)

MFRA have currently relatively limited training arrangements on stations based on training towers and water provision. Live fire, safe working at height and confined space training is conducted at the Training and Development Academy in Croxteth and is crew based. This requires crews to be on delayed turnout for the training periods and reduces the immediately available resource across the county. This becomes more impactful as the budget cuts have reduced the number of overall appliances available from 42 to 28 and now to 24.

Effectively there is no interim training system for smoke/confined space training without travelling to the academy. Other services have addressed this by having smoke houses provided on station (examples include those provided on the PFI project at Burnley, Workington, Blackburn and Carlisle East fire stations). These facilities effectively replicate a building. The interiors are generally adaptable to provide a range of room layouts and spaces.

The buildings do not provide live burn as experienced at the TDA, but utilise synthetic smoke. Whilst this isn't as realistic as live burn it is much less impactful on the surrounding environment and neighbours. They can also be adjusted to include furniture and obstacles.

In addition, such training facilities can be provided in such a way to allow RTC exercising with blue light colleagues at a station level.

A need has been identified for the provision of at least one of these type of training environments in each of the districts, aside from Liverpool (where the TDA is located). The station merger project can incorporate these facilities.

Merseyside Police

Have excellent range facilities for firearms specialist teams but have limited ability to provide an intermediate level of training and refresher courses, particularly for those teams involved in aggressive assault on buildings as part of the policing operations.

The fire houses are considered to provide an excellent adaptable solution for "buildings" on which teams can maintain and enhance training skills.

Proposal

That MFRA provide a fire house/Fire arms training house at Prescott and St Helens. The specific design of the houses to be undertaken as a joint project by MFRA/MP.

The aim being to develop a template with specialist suppliers that will be applicable for other Fire/Police collaborations around the country.

MFRA to fund the cost of the training environment in full (capital and revenue) through using the transformation and efficiency grant. MP to be granted training access free of charge at times agreed with MFRA.

Risks

Effective design that meets both service needs without compromise.

Planning Permission