

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	CSCPC/15/2
MEETING	COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CORPORATE PLANNING COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	23 SEPTEMBER 2015
SUBJECT OF REPORT	LIFT RELEASE CALL REDUCTION
LEAD OFFICER	ACFO STRATFORD, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS
RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>That the approach taken on Unwanted Lift Releases be endorsed and the report be noted.</i>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>Unwanted lift release incidents (ULR) result in increased 'blue light' journeys that have a financial burden, increase risk to staff and the public and potentially cause occupiers of buildings to lose confidence in the equipment.</p> <p>This report sets out an overview of the approach that the Service has taken to mitigate against the risks and financial burden associated with ULR.</p>
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	<p>During three years (2011 to 2014), the Service attended over 420 lift release incidents per year, with 25% of these having two incidents in a four week period or three incidents in a twenty six week period.</p> <p>Using the mobilisation cost figure of £303.45 (this is the cost attributed to an appliance mobilisation which has been calculated and published via DSFRS finance department) per appliance this will an opportunity cost saving of $2640 \times £303.45^{(2)} = £0.801m$. Closer examination of the data revealed that not all incidents had 2 appliances attend (stood down or confirmed not required etc.), so if the figure is rounded to 2500, an opportunity cost saving of £0.758m is a more realistic reflection.</p>
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS (ERBA)	The Lift Release Call Reduction draft policy document has undergone an initial Equality Risk and Benefits Assessment (ERBA) screening and it has been agreed that any potential negative impact identified is not sufficiently adverse to warrant a full impact assessment on this occasion.
APPENDICES	None.
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS	Lift Release Call Reduction and Lift Release incident operational response draft policy document

1. **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Unwanted lift release incidents (ULR) result in increased 'blue light' journeys that have a financial burden, increase risk to staff and the public and potentially cause occupiers of buildings to lose confidence in the equipment.
- 1.2 The Devon and Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority needs to maintain its obligation to attend emergency incidents as required by the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. This Act provides that "the Secretary of State may, by order, authorise fire and rescue authorities to charge a person of a specified description for any action of a specified description taken by the authority". Article 2 of, and the Schedule to, the Fire and Rescue Services (England) Order 2004 (S.I. 2004/2304) specifies the actions for which a fire and rescue authority may make a charge and specifies the person who may be subject to the charge. By virtue of section 19(6), charges may only be made on a cost recovery basis. The Service has a legal responsibility to meet these requirements as failure to ensure these duties are met would place the Authority at risk.
- 1.3 The Service previously attended lift release incidents (*which is defined as "where one or more members of the community are unable to exit a lift car due to malfunction of the mechanism"*) across both Devon and Somerset with two appliances. A six month pilot was undertaken in Central Command (East Group) which showed how proactive communication and early intervention can reduce these incident types and subsequently reduce cost, without impacting on service delivery and public safety. The pilot used the unwanted fire signals (UFS) poor performance trigger thresholds and a 28% reduction in repeat calls was seen in comparison to the previous year's incident data.
- 1.4 UFS call reduction thresholds are:
- 2 incidents in a rolling 4 week period
 - 3 incidents in a rolling 26 week period
- 1.5 Based on this evidence, an Improvement Framework (IF) suggestion was submitted to the Service Leadership Team (SLT) to consider. This was based on the development of a strategy to advance the pilot results and to realise further efficiency and cashable benefits without any impact on service delivery expectations or public safety.
- 1.6 The Service's mobilisation policy has been amended to take account of the introduction of the National Incident Types (NITs) and the alignment of our resources to the National Task Analysis outcomes with the Partnership Fire Control Project. The National Task Analysis outcomes for incident response levels of one appliance with 5 personnel to a lift release incident has been adopted within the draft policy and the call reduction and cost recovery strategy implemented.

2. **UNWANTED LIFT RELEASE (ULR) POLICY**

- 2.1 The ULR policy is aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Service by reducing unnecessary mobilisations. It is evidence based and ensures service delivery is effective and efficient so there is no negative impact on the reputation/perception of the Service.
- 2.2 Owners/Occupiers have a duty of care to people attending their premises under the Occupiers' Liability Act 1957 and Occupiers' Liability Act 1984, as well as the Health and Safety at Work Act etc. 1974 and the Workplace (Health Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 to keep property and equipment safe and properly maintained.

- 2.3 The policy seeks to reduce ULR incidents within domestic and non-domestic premises. It sets out the protocols and triggers for intervention and communication to facilitate working with identified locations and only employing cost recovery as a final resort if suitable engagement, progression and resolution are not evident.
- 2.4 This Policy is supported by Guidance Notes to give additional information and explanation to assist DSFRS personnel in their respective roles with the delivery of the policy. All outcomes will be monitored and reported against on a regular basis. The results will be observed through the Service's performance management data platforms and measured against the Corporate Plan.
- 2.5 A phased approach will be implemented from the previous position (no call reduction follow up or monitoring) to being 'proactive' with intervention and the potential for cost recovery. This will involve progressing to the issue of a letter following **any** lift release incident, clearly stating that any future attendances (following investigation) to the same location/installation for the same reason in a rolling twelve month period that cost recovery will be pursued. The agreed changes to policy will be explicitly communicated (in all correspondence) ensuring responsible persons/lift owners are in no doubt that they have a limited period in which to embed any procedural and/or maintenance arrangements before being charged for this service.
- 2.6 This paper is in relation to lift release incidents only. Any entrapment in lift machinery/mechanisms will attract the requisite resource asset allocation and appliance mobilisation for that specific incident.

3. **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 ULR incidents cause a significant drain on our resources. The Service is committed to minimising false/unwanted calls and thus reducing the number of unnecessary mobilisations and their consequential impact on service delivery, business and commerce. A reduction in ULR incidents will allow operational assets to be available for genuine emergencies; also releasing resources to allow additional training, prevention and protection activities to take place.
- 3.2 During three years (2011 to 2014), the Service attended over 420 lift release incidents per year, with 25% of these having two incidents in a four week period or three incidents in a twenty six week period.
- 3.3 Using the mobilisation cost figure of £303.45 (which is the cost attributed to an appliance mobilisation which has been calculated and published via DSFRS finance department) per appliance this will give an opportunity cost saving of $2640 \times £303.45^{(2)} = £0.801m$. Closer examination of the data revealed that not all incidents had 2 appliances attend (stood down or confirmed not required etc.), so if the figure is rounded to 2500, a total figure of £0.758m is a more realistic reflection.

4. **CONCLUSIONS**

- 4.1 Incidents that are unwanted have a major impact on the Service and cause concern for the following reasons:
- Impact our ability to respond to real emergencies;
 - Increase the risk of vehicle accidents;
 - Increase our carbon footprint

- Reduce the time available for community safety and risk reduction activities;
- Impact on training for operational officers;
- Cost associated per appliance for each incident attended;
- They adversely impact upon the employers/businesses who release staff as on-call fire-fighters for operational duties.

4.2 This policy is underpinned by the requirement for owner/occupiers to maintain robust arrangements for releasing persons stuck in lifts in non-emergency situations using appropriately trained and qualified lift technicians.

4.3 The Committee is asked to endorse the approach taken and to note this report.

TREVOR STRATFORD
Director of Operations