



DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	DSFRA/10/15
MEETING	DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY (ORDINARY MEETING)
DATE OF MEETING	28 MAY 2010
SUBJECT OF REPORT	DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT APRIL 2009 – MARCH 2010
LEAD OFFICER	DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER
RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>That the report be noted.</i>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>Attached for consideration and discussion is the Performance Report April 2009 - March 2010 for Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service.</p> <p>The report looks at performance and progress against the Corporate Plan Goals, Activities and Targets for 2009/10.</p>
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	None
APPENDICES	<p>Annex 1 – Guide to understanding the Performance Report</p> <p>Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority Performance Report, April 2009 – March 2010 (enclosed and page numbered separately)</p>
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS	Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority Corporate Plan 2009/10 – 2011/12

1. **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This report gives an overview of Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service's performance against the Corporate Plan 2009/10 – 2011/12 from 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010. Annex 1 includes a guide to understanding this report. An earlier version of this report was considered recently by the Audit and Performance Review Committee (Minute *APRC/24 of the meeting held on 13 May 2010 refers).

2. **GOAL 1 - TO PROACTIVELY REDUCE RISK, TO SAVE LIFE, PROTECT PROPERTY AND THE ENVIRONMENT FROM FIRE AND OTHER EMERGENCIES**

2.1 A key measure of success for this goal is the reduction in deaths and casualties at accidental dwelling fires as well as the reduction in the number of fires.

2.2 Thankfully, the number of fatalities each year is small, although sadly 6 deaths at accidental dwelling fires have been recorded in 2009/10. The target to reduce these deaths has been set over a number of years because of the small numbers involved. The Service target was to reduce the number of deaths at accidental dwelling fires by 20% over the 11 years to March 2010, which related to no more than 6 deaths per year within that period. We have in fact succeeded in achieving more than our target 20% reduction, recording an average of 5.4 fatalities per year since 1999/2000.

2.3 The number of casualties at these types of fires has also shown a decrease, down 53% from last year, a reduction of 53 casualties. We have therefore significantly exceeded our target reduction of 5%. The number of accidental dwelling fires however has shown a small increase, up by 7 fires, and the target reduction has not been achieved.

2.4 To achieve these targets, the main focus of work has been to undertake Home Fire Safety Visits. Throughout 2008/09, the expansion of the Community Safety Action Teams (CSAT) meant this work accelerated with over 12,000 checks being completed within the year. In 2009/10, nearly 18,000 Home Fire Safety Visits were undertaken, and more information is being used to enable this work to be targeted at our more vulnerable groups.

2.5 Another area of focus for the Service is the rate of non-domestic premises fires, i.e. those fires in buildings that are not homes. There was a small increase in the year (up 61 fires to 609 fires) which meant that we did not achieve the target. Work undertaken to reduce non-domestic fires relates to our Fire Safety enforcement activity where the Service did not achieve the number of visits during the year that it had intended.

2.6 Deliberate fires – often referred to as arson - is another key area of work for the Service. We believe that partnerships with local authorities, fire investigation and our youth engagement activity through schemes such as Phoenix and Firebreak have all helped to continue to reduce the rate of deliberate fires across the Service. The most severe types of these of fires – primary deliberate fires involving property and vehicles - have fallen by 21% and 27% respectively, collectively a reduction of over 200 fires. Secondary deliberate fires – these are mostly outdoor rubbish and grass fires – also fell by 24%, 475 fires.

2.7 Road traffic collisions is one of the primary rescue functions of the Service. The Service is heavily involved in the prevention of road traffic collisions and works closely with the Road safety partnerships and has seconded officers to these to assist with their work.

- 2.8 Work has continued throughout the year on our planning and response arrangements for major incidents. We have been working with two Local Resilience Forums (Avon & Somerset and Devon & Cornwall) to ensure we are well prepared. We have also enhanced our rescue capability and developed further our own business continuity arrangements.
- 2.9 Finally, one of the major changes for the Service is the establishment of the Regional Control Centre (RCC). The South West will be one of the first control centres to go live, with Devon and Somerset being the first service to cut over to the SW RCC. This national project has and will continue to have a significant impact upon the Service.

3. GOAL 2 - TO BE AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE

- 3.1 The Service is finding it challenging to achieve its targets in recruiting and retaining women firefighters and people from ethnic minority backgrounds. Devon and Somerset is not unique with this issue, with many other services experiencing similar difficulties. A lot of work and effort has gone into our recruitment campaigns and this is starting to deliver some results, but there is still a long way to go. We have also undertaken exit interviews with staff to understand why they are leaving and in most cases this is due to external reasons.
- 3.2 The number of staff employed with a disability has significantly increased. This is partly due to a recent survey where more people have been confident to report they have a disability.
- 3.3 The main driver in improving the Service's approach to Equality and Diversity has been the implementation of 'Making the Connections'. This is essentially a single equality scheme for Devon & Somerset covering all six equality strands and brings together all the current and future activities in DSFRS that are relevant to the Local Government Equality Standard.

Recruitment and positive action

(i) Black and Minority Ethnic Communities

- 3.4 The Labour Force Survey (a quarterly sample survey of households living at private addresses in Great Britain) in 2008 indicated that the local minority ethnic working age population across Devon and Somerset is 5.29%. This figure has been used to set the Service black and minority ethnic (BME) communities recruitment target, as it most accurately reflects the community average percentage across the two counties. However variation in local areas is significant, being for example 13% in Exeter, 5.1% in Mendip, 1.2% in North Devon and 0% in Sedgemoor.
- 3.5 Over the last few years, there has been a relatively low turnover of staff and therefore limited opportunity to increase diversity in the organisation. However, the recent whole time recruitment process at in the summer of last year saw an increase in the number of applicants who identified as being from minority ethnic backgrounds. Part of that recruitment programme involved making use of established networks and partnerships with established minority ethnic targeted media, organisations and networks to disseminate Service recruitment messages. Unfortunately, the increased attraction rate only translated into 1 wholtime firefighter from a BME background successfully recruited throughout 2009/10.

- 3.6 The Service has committed itself to a specific recruitment target that, by 2013, 7.29% (i.e. 2% above working age minority ethnic figure of 5.29% across both Devon and Somerset) of all new joiners to the organisation will be from minority ethnic backgrounds. This is a challenging target for two reasons:
- the Service has relatively low staff turnover and limited recruitment opportunities; and
 - retained duty system (RDS) personnel are recruited in rural areas where the BME population is significantly lower the 5.29% average. Added to that, the recruitment pool can only be within a five minute travel time to the local station.

(ii) Gender

- 3.7 The Service (along with all other UK fire and rescue services [FRSs]) is looking to increase the percentage of women in front line operational roles. As with the previous observations about low staff turnover, the Service has a challenging target, but the organisation is nevertheless committed that “by 2013 a minimum of 18% of new entrants to the operational service will be women”.
- 3.8 The whole time recruitment saw an intake of 2 female firefighters in a cohort of 24. Disappointingly though, the remaining retained fire-fighter recruitment only successfully recruited 4 women out of 54 retained recruits over the last year.

(iii) Positive Action Strategy

- 3.9 To address this going forward, the Service has developed a positive action strategy for 2010-13. Its focus is on increasing the recruitment of females to operational roles and ethnic minority people across all roles. The short-term aims of the strategy will be associated with our immediate recruitment requirements. The long-term aims look to equip the emerging generation with knowledge about the modern fire and rescue service and its opportunities and encourage them to consider it as a professional career. Some BME communities have traditionally seen the service as a manual role without a great deal of professional standing. Our ‘future leaders’ messages - about professional development and progression - and graduate engagement will help to address that cultural perception.
- 3.10 The development of this strategy is based upon input from our minority ethnic community partners, our representative bodies and our own staff, particularly women firefighters. It is designed to work within the realities of the current and future restrictions and requirements (economic, recruitment and organisational) for the Service and has long term and short term objectives.
- 3.11 The recent whole time recruitment process was accompanied by a positive action poster campaign that featured a young boy in a fire helmet with the strap line “When he grows up he wants to be a firefighter...just like his mum”. The poster (its imagery and its message) was well received by current members of staff, external gender groups, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) groups and various local BME community groups.
- 3.12 Similarly, the ethos of this strategy is an inclusive, non-tokenistic approach to positive action. It attempts to establish the concept of a diverse workforce in its messages (the breadth of the role, future leaders, career progression, flexibility) and imagery as core to our business. Three of the activities in the strategy have been addressed to provide some of the attraction tools we will need to address the long term aims, and to be targeted in those areas of under establishment where we are recruiting in the short term, namely:

- the publication of “Considering Needs” - the equality scheme overview which communicates our equality priorities;
- “From the Community, for the Community” - The publication of a recruitment information pack and display banners which details ‘Modern Firefighting, Future Leaders and the Retained duty system
- The production of a film, ‘All fired up’, which tells the firefighter’s story, and features a mix of gender and race. This can be viewed by following the link below

<http://www.dsfire.gov.uk/Newsdesk/allfiredupvideo.asp>

3.13 The Service has also recently sponsored Exeter University Netball team to assist in our attraction for future leaders and graduates of both genders and all backgrounds. The Service has signed up to the Stonewall Diversity Champions programme and are able to use their logo on our recruitment literature – sending a message to LGBT people of our commitment to diversity and the development of an inclusive working environment. Our work with National Disabled Fire Association (NDFFA) also means we are able to use its logo in the same way to demonstrate our commitment to promote positive outcomes for people living with disabilities.

3.14 Work will continue to ensure that positive action is embedded in the recruitment process of the organisation to address non-uniformed and uniformed recruitment needs. A significant activity in the strategy is to examine whether there are any trends in the fall out during the selection process and identify where positive action, other than attraction, might help address this, such as developing interview skills.

3.15 The recruitment literature and films referred to above will be presented at a future Members Forum meeting.

Sickness

3.16 During 2009/10, the levels of sickness within the service fell by 16%. This follows a reduction in the previous year of 22%, and therefore we are continuing to make excellent progress in this area where we have previously recorded very high rates. Whilst this reduction cannot be attributed to a single Service intervention, it would suggest that the overall improvements and focus that the Service has made in welfare are starting to produce direct results.

Training

3.17 The Service continues to deliver quality training for its staff and is well regarded nationally. The Service is also part of a shared services agreement with Avon FRS and Gloucestershire FRS with a joint training centre at Portishead.

4 GOAL 3 - TO PROVIDE AN EFFECTIVE, EFFICIENT AND ECONOMIC SERVICE

4.1 Provisional figures show that the Service was successful in containing expenditure within the agreed revenue budget for the year and has therefore now done so for the first three years of the new combined Service. The Service is also on course to exceed the £3 million savings in the first 5 years of the new combined service as identified in the original business case for combination.

- 4.2 Pre and post combination a lot of work has been undertaken to harmonise and develop policies and systems. Several of these now need refining and embedding in the Service. With such a large organisation, clear communication is essential and much work has been undertaken to develop a strategy, for both internal and external communication.
- 4.3 However, although we are a large service, we cannot and should not do everything alone. Therefore we have been working hard to develop our existing partnerships both at a strategic and local level.
- 4.4 In terms of optimising the use of resources a range of initiatives have been undertaken. We are actively working with premises to reduce unwanted fire alarms and have seen significant reduction of 38% - over 1,800 calls. With regards to malicious false alarms, robust call challenge and working with the police and telecom companies has resulted in these calls reducing for the fourth year in a row. The Service has also started significant research into how our resources are distributed and how we can best use them to deliver all aspects of service delivery.

NEIL GIBBINS
Deputy Chief Fire Officer

Guide to understanding the Performance reports

Much of the new performance report now comes directly from our Performance Information Management System (PIMS), which is now being widely used within the Service to access performance information and effectively manage performance.

The performance summary is shown for each of our Goals and Priorities and is split into two halves.

The first half looks at the progress status of the activities and targets for each of our priorities within the Corporate Plan. These are strategy maps directly taken from the PIMS system. These demonstrate that by achieving our Corporate Activities this will impact and influence the achievement of our Corporate Targets.

The second half looks at the Corporate Targets in more detail, showing actual performance against target and previous year.

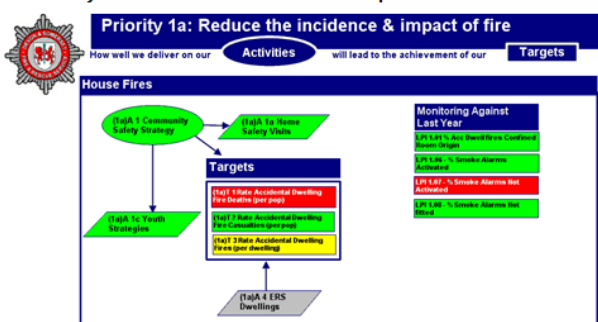
Performance Summary

Devon and Somerset Performance Report
April – March 2009/10
APRC Meeting 13/05/10

Goal 1: To proactively reduce risk, to save life, protect property and the environment from fire and other emergencies

House Fires

Priority 1a: Reduce the incidence & impact of fire



House Fires

Goal 1 - Targets	Actual	Target	% Variance	Previous Year	% Variance	Direction of Travel from Last Month
(1a)T 1 Rate Accidental Dwelling Fire Deaths (per pop)	0.35	0.36	-2.8%	0.12	191.7%	Worse
# Accidental Dwelling Fire Deaths	6	6	0.0%	2	200.0%	Worse
(1a)T 2 Rate Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties (per pop)	2.82	5.70	-50.5%	6.03	-53.2%	Better
# Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties	47	95	-50.5%	100	-53.0%	Better
(1a)T 3 Rate Accidental Dwelling Fires (per dwelling)	15.2	14.4	5.6%	15.3	-0.7%	Better
# Accidental Dwelling Fires	1104	1042	5.0%	1097	0.5%	Better

Goal 1 - Activities	Actual	Target	% Variance	Previous Year	% Variance	Direction of Travel from Last Month
(1a)A 1a Home Fire Safety Visits Completed	16,369	13,456	21.6%	12,105	35.2%	Worse
# HFSV in Progress	1,495					
# HFSV in Total	17,864					
(1a)A 1c Youth Strategies to maximise Youth Inclusion	147	66	116.2%	49	200.0%	Worse
# Junior Life Skills Events						
(1a)A 4 Emergency Response Standard - Dwelling Fires (% Overall Standard Met)	86.05%					Better
(1a)A 4a % 1st Attendance in 10 minutes	69.68%					Worse
(1a)A 4a % Achieved (inside 10 minute Area)	79.39%					Better
(1a)A 4a % Achieved (Outside 10 minute Area)	71.24%					Worse

Monitoring Only	Actual	Previous Year	% Variance	Direction of Travel from Last Month
% Acc Dwelling Fires Confined Room Origin	89.95%	89.79%	0.2%	Worse
# Acc Dwelling Fires Confined to Room Origin	993	985	1.3%	Better
% Smoke Alarm Activated	44.45%	43.55%	1.3%	Better
# Smoke Alarm Activated	536	539		
% Smoke Alarm Not Activated	16.58%	12.40%	33.7%	Better
# Smoke Alarm Not Activated	200	152		
% Smoke Alarm Not Fitted	38.97%	43.72%	-10.9%	Better
# Smoke Alarm Not Fitted	470	536		

1. Targets will be set for the new Emergency Response Standards following a review of the first year's data.

Corporate Activities

The Corporate Activities are shown within the strategy map as ovals or parallelograms. Progress against most of these will be through monitoring projects which have been depicted as ovals. However, a few of these are measured by numbers, such as the number of Home Fire Safety Checks, number of Building Regulation Consultations and the number of Fire Safety Enforcement notices. These are shown as parallelograms.

For the projects a judgment is made by the project manager on the progress of the project and this will be either:

- Red for projects that are not on track.
- Amber for projects that are on track.
- Green for projects that are meeting or exceeding expectations.
- Grey illustrates missing data.

The Corporate Activities measured by numbers follows the same rules as the Corporate Targets below.


Corporate Targets

The Corporate Targets, some of which are the former Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPs), are shown as rectangular within the strategy map.

Performance is given a Red, Amber, or Green rating.

- Red shows performance that is more than 10% below target.
- Amber shows performance is 10% within target.
- Green shows performance which has achieved or exceeded the target.

For each Target, the following information is presented:

Goal 1 - Targets	Actual	Target	% Variance	Previous Year	% Variance	Direction of Travel from Last Month
 (1a)T 2 Rate Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties (per pop)	2.82	5.70	-50.5%	6.03	-53.2%	Better
# Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties	47	95	-50.5%	100	-53.0%	

Actual	Shows cumulative performance from 1 st April 2009 – 31 st March 2010
Target	Shows target for 2009/10
% Variance	Shows percentage change against target
Previous Year	Shows results for 2008/09
% Variance	Shows percentage change against previous year
Direction of Travel from Last Month	Shows whether performance has improved or worsened from last month's position
(1a)T 2 Rate	Corporate Plan Reference, Priority 1a, Target 2
#	Number divided by 100,000 of the population
	Number