

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	CSC/24/16
MEETING	COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	13 December 2024
SUBJECT OF REPORT	Risk Dependant Availability Performance and Impact Report
LEAD OFFICER	Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Director of Service Delivery
RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>That the report be noted by the Committee.</i>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>Risk dependant availability (RDA) appliance crewing was introduced between October 2020 and May 2022, through the implementation of the Service Delivery Operating Model.</p> <p>RDA appliances are second pumps that are required to be available during nighttime hours, between 1800 and 0800¹. This is the period when life-risk in dwelling fires is deemed to be greatest. The RDA appliances were identified based on the risk present within the station area, levels of demand and challenges to availability.</p> <p>While some appliances have consistently performed near to or exceeded the target of 85.0% availability, overall performance has remained well below target.</p> <p>While availability levels are a concern, three of the appliances exhibiting poor performance are comparatively low demand, meaning the impact of unavailability is low.</p> <p>However, both Brixham and Wells are relatively high-demand areas with significant populations that are struggling to maintain availability. These are stations where the presence of an available RDA appliance is likely to have a greater impact.</p> <p>The Fire Cover Review will provide a holistic assessment of the provision of operational resources, including RDA and will determine future resourcing needs.</p> <p>In the short-term, work is continuing to identify where improvements may be made to support recruitment and ensure the required skills are available to support improved availability levels.</p>

¹ RDA appliances may also be crewed during the day on a voluntary basis; however performance is only measured between 1800 and 0800.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	As discussed.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS (ERBA)	None.
APPENDICES	Appendix A: Risk Dependant Availability Performance and Impact
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS	Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service Community Safety Committee Performance Report Q2 2024/25

APPENDIX A

Risk Dependant Availability Performance and Impact

A review of performance and the impact of unavailability October 2023 to September 2024

1. **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Risk dependant availability (RDA) appliance crewing was introduced between October 2020 and May 2022, through the implementation of the Service Delivery Operating Model.
- 1.2 RDA appliances are second pumps that are required to be available during nighttime hours, between 1800 and 0800². This is the period when life-risk in dwelling fires is deemed to be greatest. The RDA appliances were identified based on the risk present within the station area, levels of demand and challenges to availability.
- 1.3 Prior to the introduction of RDA, many of the stations struggled to crew their second appliances consistently. Through reducing the hours that the appliances were required to be available, it was hoped that availability hours could be focused when risk is greatest. Generally, maintaining availability during daytime hours is more challenging, so RDA also reduced the administrative burden somewhat.
- 1.4 The 11 RDA appliances are located at:
Ilfracombe, Okehampton, Brixham, Dartmouth, Teignmouth, Honiton, Sidmouth, Tiverton, Tavistock, Williton and Wells.

2. **PERFORMANCE**

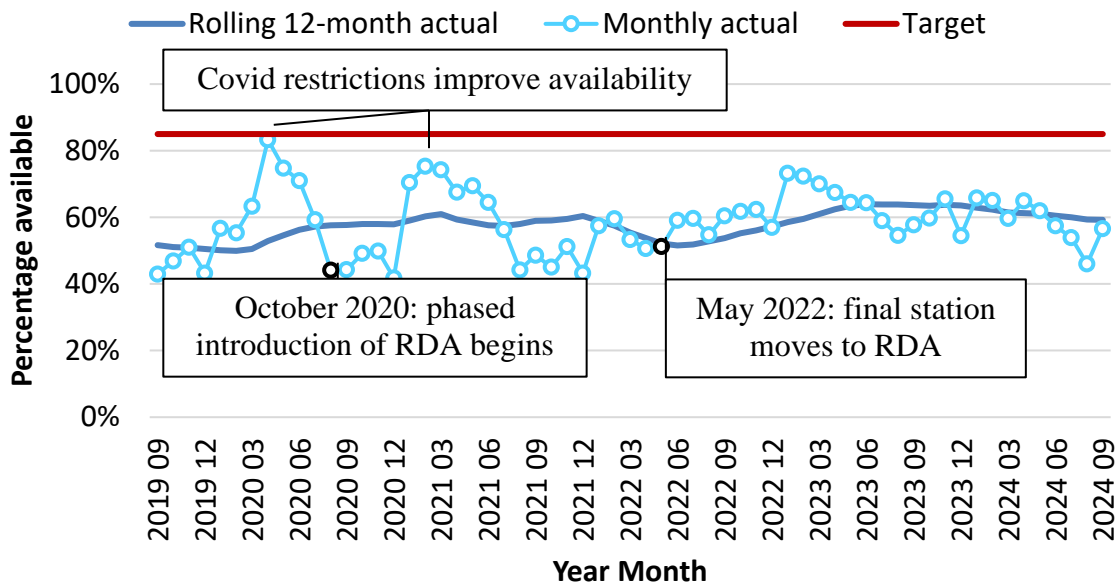
- 2.1 The availability of RDA appliance is measured during nighttime hours only and calculates the percentage of the total required hours that the pump was available to respond.
- 2.2 A target of 85.0% availability has been set, in line with the expectation for standard pumps³. With the reduction in required hours compared to standard appliances, which are required to be available to respond 24 hours a day, seven days a week, it was deemed reasonable to expect the same performance.
- 2.3 However, while some appliances have consistently performed near to or exceeded the 85.0% target, most have failed to meet it, and a number have struggled maintain even low levels of availability.

² RDA appliances may also be crewed during the day on a voluntary basis; however, performance is only measured between 1800 and 0800.

³ A description of the pumping appliance groups can be found in appendix A.

2.4 Figure 1 details overall monthly performance levels and 12-month rolling performance against target. With the exception of periods that were impacted by COVID restrictions such as lockdowns, where many staff were able to provide greater levels of availability due to changes in working arrangements or furlough, performance has been consistently well below target.

2.5 *Figure 1: rolling 12-month and monthly performance against target*



2.6 Between the 1 October 2023 to the 30 September 2024, average RDA availability stood at 59.2%.

2.7 It is unusual for RDA appliances to arrive first on scene, therefore the impact analysis focuses on incidents where two or more pumps arrived on scene.

2.8 During the 12-month period, a total of 218 incidents which involved two or more appliances were attended. Fifty-three of the incidents were assessed as being affected by the unavailability of an RDA appliance.

2.9 Clearly, an efficient response is key to ensuring successful outcomes. However, the degree of impact of RDA unavailability varies markedly.

2.10 Where an incident has been affected by RDA unavailability, the average⁴ delta⁵ of first and second appliance arrival is 6 minutes 31 seconds, compared to 3 minutes 39 seconds for two pump RDA incidents unaffected by availability. A difference of 2 minutes 52 seconds.

⁴ Based upon a 5% trimmed mean.

⁵ The delta is the difference between two things, in this case, the arrival time of the first and second pumping appliances.

2.11 The range in P1 to P2 arrival time delta is similar irrespective of whether availability was an issue.

- Affected incidents: 14 seconds to 25 minutes 25 seconds
- Unaffected incidents: 16 seconds to 24 minutes 17 seconds

2.12 Figure 2 presents availability performance and statistics on attendance at incidents with two or more appliances. Unsurprisingly, it shows clearly that stations with greater availability see fewer incidents affected by unavailability.

2.13 *Figure 2: availability performance with statistics on attendance⁶ at incidents with two or more appliances*

Appliance	Oct 2023 to Sep 2024	Two or more pumps	Affected by unavailability
Ilfracombe P2	26.0% (Exception)	11	2
Okehampton P2	88.1% (Succeeding)	17	1
Brixham P2	44.9% (Exception)	24	18
Dartmouth P2	1.5% (Exception)	9	3
Teignmouth P2	79.0% (Near target)	26	4
Honiton P2	89.5% (Succeeding)	24	1
Sidmouth P2	81.0% (Near target)	16	3
Tiverton P2	88.4% (Succeeding)	24	1
Tavistock P2	61.1% (Exception)	30	6
Williton P2	66.7% (Exception)	12	0
Wells P2	25.2% (Exception)	25	13
Overall	59.2% (Exception)	218	53

2.14 However, it is also clear that there are station locations that see very few incidents requiring two or more appliances during RDA hours. Ilfracombe,

⁶ Where two or more appliances have arrived on scene.

Williton and Dartmouth see an average of one two pump incident attended or fewer per month during RDA hours.

2.15 The greatest impact is seen at Brixham and Wells. Both have significant populations but struggle to maintain the availability of their second appliances.

2.16 *Figure 3: incidents affected by RDA availability October 2023 to September 2024 by type and ERS performance.*

Incident type	Two pumps on scene	Second pump ERS met
Primary dwelling fires	11	5
Primary non-domestic fires	10	NA
Primary vehicle and outdoor fires	2	NA
Secondary and chimney fires	3	NA
RTCs	13	7
Other SSCs	5	NA
False alarms	9	NA

3. **CONCLUSION**

3.1 While availability levels are a concern, three of the appliances exhibiting poor performance are comparatively low demand, meaning the impact of unavailability is low.

3.2 However, both Brixham and Wells are relatively high-demand areas with significant populations that are struggling to maintain availability. These are stations where the presence of an available RDA appliance is likely to have a greater impact.

3.3 The Fire Cover Review will provide a holistic analysis of the provision of operational resources, including RDA and will determine future resourcing needs. In the short-term, work is continuing to identify where improvements may be made to support recruitment and ensure the required skills are available to support improved availability levels.

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