



HUMBERSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Emergency Response

Control Flexible Block Leave

Owner	Executive Director of Emergency Response
Responsible Person	Heard of Emergency Preparedness
Date Written	September 2018
Date of Last Review	April 2021
Date of next review	April 2024 (New policy in progress)
EIA	



What we must
do well



How we support our
communities



We value and support
the people we employ



We efficiently manage
the Service

CONTENTS

1. Introduction
 - Core Code of Ethics
 - National Guidance
2. Equality & Inclusion
3. Definition
 - Block Leave Group
 - Control Room Crewing Levels
 - Watch Establishment
 - Standard Watch Crewing Levels for Leave Purposes
4. Allocation of Leave
5. Movement of Annual Leave
6. Exchanges/Movements Where Watch Strength is below Establishment – Exceptional Circumstances
7. Short Leave Notices
8. Public Holiday Crewing
9. Appendix 1: Aide Memoire
10. Appendix 2: Control Room Leave Application

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy details the annual leave entitlement of Service Control based employees and sets out the guidelines and framework for its allocation whilst ensuring the aims and exigencies of the Service are met.

Humberside Fire & Rescue Service (HFRS) will ensure that conditions relating to leave do not fall below those which have been nationally negotiated; the principle being that one day's leave is equal to one day/night shift i.e., every employee will have an overall allocation of leave to use within the guidelines of this Policy. HFRS will ensure that conditions relating to leave do not fall below those which have been nationally negotiated.

Core Code of Ethics

HFRS has adopted the Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services. The Service is committed to the ethical principles of the Code and strives to apply them in all we do, therefore, those principles are reflected in this guidance.

National Guidance

Any National Guidance which has been adopted by HFRS, will be reflected in this Policy.

2. EQUALITY & INCLUSION

HFRS has a legal responsibility under the Equality Act 2010, and a commitment, to ensure it does not discriminate either directly or indirectly in any of its functions and services nor in its treatment of staff, in relation to race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief, gender reassignment or marriage and civil partnership. It also has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants, employees and service users.

3. DEFINITION

The following terms and definitions will apply to this and other associated policies.

Block Leave Group

A Block Leave Group to which an individual is assigned.

Control Room Crewing Levels:

- A flexible approach to maintaining appropriate crewing levels within Service Control has been taken for a number of years and this is reflected in the relaxation of the Standard Control Room Crewing Level (SCRCL) of 5 for all shifts other than those commencing on designated Public Holidays.

- The SCRCL on all shifts **except** those on designated Public Holidays is 4 (2 supervisory managers and 2 firefighters (Control))
- The SCRCL on shifts commencing on a designated Public Holiday remains 5 (2 supervisory managers and 3 firefighters (Control)).
- The Minimum Control Room Staffing Level (MCRSL) is the minimum number of employees required to be on duty at any one time to ensure operational duties are carried out. The MCRSL is 3. Staffing levels falling to or below this figure would trigger the implementation of measures outlined in the Control Room Staff Shortage Plan.

Note: The SCRCL may be raised on occasion to meet predicted increased operational demand, e.g., Spate Conditions.

Watch Establishment:

Resources allocated to each watch for the Service to maintain Standard Control Room Crewing Levels having regard to courses and leave. The current generic watch establishments are 6.

Watch Strength:

The number of employees actually available on a watch, depending upon vacancies, sickness, etc. (Watch strength may be above or below the Watch establishment).

Standard Watch Crewing Levels for Leave Purposes:

This is relative to the actual Watch strength in relation to Watch establishment at the time of granting leave or an exchange of leave. Where watch strength is below establishment, 'exceptional circumstances may apply.

If watch strength is above/below establishment, the Standard Watch Crewing Level for leave Purposes is increased/ reduced in line with the number of employees over/under Watch Establishment e.g.:

- Watch establishment is 6, but Watch strength is 7, then Standard Watch Crewing Level for Leave Purposes would be 5. (Except on Public Holidays when it would be 6).
- Alternatively, Watch establishment is 6, but Watch strength is 5, then Standard Watch Crewing Level for leave purposes would be 3 except on Public Holidays when it would be 4.

4. ALLOCATION OF LEAVE

The paid annual leave entitlement for Control employees (FF, CM, and WM) is as per Scheme of Conditions of Service Sixth Edition 2004 and is set out below:

- Scale A 25 days
- Scale B 5 days

- Long Service 3 days (for employees who at the start of the leave year have completed at least 5 years continuous service).

For all employees the leave year will start on 1st January and end on 31st December. 25 Scale A, 2 Scale B and any long service leave entitlement will be outlined on the block leave chart and programmed onto the Control register and recorded on the individuals leave and sickness record in agreement with and by the WM (C). The SM (C) will approve leave for WM (C). Leave shall be allocated for the forthcoming leave year by 1st November. Employees then have the opportunity to enter the remaining 3 days Scale B leave onto the Control register before 1st December, subject to the exigencies of the Service.

Watch Managers are required to allocate and enter training courses prior to the 1 December. (Central and local course nominations for the coming year will be determined and circulated by Operational Training during October each year).

Once leave and courses are programmed, and not before 0900 hours on 1st December, leave can be changed subject to maintenance of Standard Watch Crewing Levels for Leave Purposes.

5. MOVEMENT OF ANNUAL LEAVE

All applications for leave and exchanges/movements of leave are to be submitted on form [CON01](#) Leave Application ([see Appendix 2](#)) to the WM, or, for WM, to the SM for approval and programming.

It is essential for the smooth operation of the system that all employees conduct business with a high degree of honesty and integrity when administering applications for leave. When considering any application for leave, an exchange or movement of annual leave (or requests for 'other' leave'), the exigencies of the Service are to be given highest priority, i.e. maintenance of Standard Watch Crewing Levels for leave purposes must be achieved before leave requests/changes may be considered.

In all circumstances, the Standard Watch Crewing Levels for leave purposes must be maintained after granting alterations to programmed leave.

Appropriately qualified employees will be maintained at all times. Watch Managers must ensure that a balance is maintained in the allocation of block leave and the number of employees on leave at any time.

An exchange with employees from a different watch (or the use of a 'stand-in') may be considered subject to the conditions below and the maintenance of the appropriate number of qualified employees with a base level of knowledge and expertise.

An individual must have 11 consecutive hours of rest in any 24-hour period. The individual must have an uninterrupted 24 hours' period of rest during a 7-day period.

This Service Policy complies with the Working Time Regulations (revised 2006). Paragraphs 18 and 19 are requirements within the Regulations. Their application will be accommodated within established working patterns which comply with provisions in the Regulations allowing rest periods to be taken in a different pattern to that set out in the Regulations.

Overtime for annual leave purposes will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances as detailed in [paragraph 6](#).

To ensure Standard Control Room Crewing Levels are maintained, the granting of leave and leave exchanges/movements will have regard to situations where Watch strengths exceed authorised establishment. Therefore, where a Watch has a strength higher than establishment, requests for leave or leave exchanges/movements can only be granted if minimum Standard Watch Crewing Levels for Leave Purposes are maintained after a request is granted.

The table below illustrates the relationship between Watch establishment, Watch strength and standard Watch crewing levels for leave purposes.

Watch Establishment	Watch Strength	Standard Watch Crewing Level for Leave Purposes
6	7	5 (6 for PHs)

6. EXCHANGES/MOVEMENTS WHERE WATCH STRENGTH IS BELOW ESTABLISHMENT – EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Any applications for leave and movement/exchange of leave on Watches with a strength below establishment may be considered in 'exceptional circumstances' and approved by the Watch Manager after cover has been sourced to maintain the relevant Standard Control Room Crewing Level.

Therefore, where a Watch has a strength lower than establishment, requests for leave or leave exchanges/movements can only be granted if minimum Standard Watch Crewing Levels for leave purposes are maintained after a request is granted.

Exceptional circumstances would be applied in the following circumstances:
Vacancies causing strength to go below the Watch Establishment figure.
Absence due to Long Term Sickness causing strength to go below the watch establishment figure.

Emergency Preparedness Control Flexible Block Leave

Long term transfers, which are temporary moves supported by Form PER 12 causing strength to go below the Watch Establishment figure.

Maternity and paternity leave causing strength to go below the Watch Establishment figure.

Watch Establishment	Watch Strength	Standard Watch Crewing Level for Leave Purposes
6	5	3 (4 for PHs)
6	5	3 (4 for PHs)
6	4	2 (3 for PHs)

Arrangements to cover leave for exceptional circumstances must be secured by Watch based managers prior to approval. Once approved a copy of the Form CON01 must be forwarded to the Control Room Manager.

The exigencies of the Service must be the first consideration in all cases.

Prior to requesting leave the applicant should in the first instance seek a mutual exchange. If this is not possible arrangements to cover leave for exceptional circumstances should be initially sourced by the supervisory manager from an off-duty Watch (detachment). If this is not possible overtime may be considered.

By referring to the Control register, leave movements can be effectively managed. The procedure detailed in [Appendix 1](#) must be strictly adhered to.

Note: Every effort must be made to ensure that staffing levels do not fall below the relevant Standard Control Room Staffing Level and mutual exchanges and detachments must be explored before Overtime is considered.

7. SHORT NOTICE LEAVE

Individuals may take leave at short notice having first reported for duty provided the taking of such 'Short Notice Leave' does not result in Control Room crewing levels falling below the relevant SCRCL (at the discretion of the duty Watch Manager short notice leave may also be granted on a designated public holiday taking Control Room crewing to 4).

Any leave taken at short notice would be counted as a full day's allocation of leave when calculating an individual's leave entitlement. Any such requests are to be approved by the duty WM (C) and supported by a CON01 Form ([see Appendix 2](#)).

8. PUBLIC HOLIDAY CREWING

Crewing on any duty day or night shift that forms part of one of the 8 public holidays (as described in the Scheme of Conditions of Service, Sixth Edition 2004) shall be reduced to a Standard Control Room Crewing Level of 5.

Where the number of employees on duty are forecasted to be in excess of the

Emergency Preparedness Control Flexible Block Leave

Standard Control Room Crewing Level for any or part of a shift which falls upon a public holiday, the Watch Manager will ensure that the appropriate number of Watch employees are granted additional rota leave to reduce crewing levels to provide the Standard Control Room Crewing Level of 5.

Local arrangements are to be made to forecast and record those employees due to be granted additional rota leave. Watch Managers will be included on this log for additional rota leave; though managers must take into account the availability of other substantive managers ensuring a minimum of two supervisory managers remain on duty.

On the last nightshift of the tour of duty preceding the tour of duty where the additional rota leave is to be taken, the Watch Manager whose crewing is above the Standard Control Room Crewing Level for public holidays will liaise with other Control Watch Managers to ensure Standard Control Room Crewing Levels for public holidays are maintained. After ensuring this requirement the Watch Manager can then authorise and book the additional rota leave onto the Control register.

Where it becomes apparent that crewing will fall below the Standard Control Crewing Level for public holidays, after the finish of the last night shift immediately preceding the tour of duty where additional rota leave has been granted, then those people on additional rota leave can be contacted to be offered the option of returning to their rostered duty.

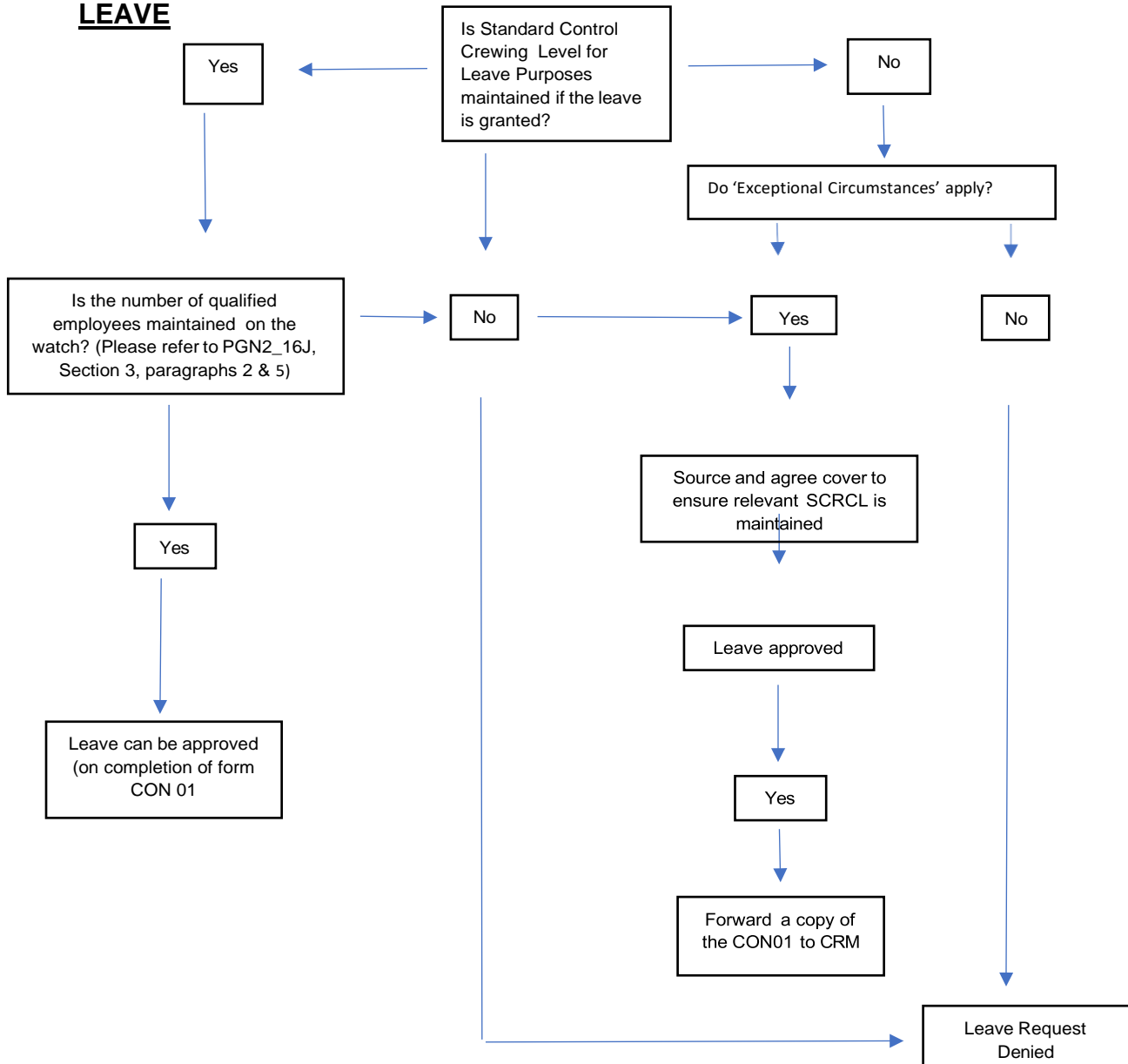
If there are no volunteers from those on additional rota leave then the normal overtime guidelines will be followed to select an individual to report to Control for duty. The individual will be paid at Public Holiday rate as laid down in the Scheme of Conditions of Service.

Individuals who wish to apply for leave on any of the Public Holidays, and subject to it being in line with the laid down guidance, will take priority over 'additional rota days leave' unless confirmation has been completed on the last night shift of the preceding tour of duty.

**If you require any further guidance / information in relation to this policy,
please contact Emergency Preparedness**

**APPENDIX A: AIDE MEMOIRE FOR REQUESTS FOR LEAVE AND/OR THE
MOVEMENT /EXCHANGE OF LEAVE**

**MEMOIRE FOR REQUESTS FOR LEAVE AND/OR THE MOVEMENT /EXCHANGE OF
LEAVE**



Employees committing to cover for leave granted for exceptional circumstances who become unavailable to work the agreed duty must inform the duty Watch Manager at the earliest opportunity to enable a replacement to be arranged.

APPENDIX B: CONTROL ROOM LEAVE APPLICATION/CHANGE OF LEAVE FORM

CON01 REV DEC12

Note to applicant: - This form should be completed with regard to the contents of the Control Flexible Block Leave System Policy.

To be completed by applicant:

Name		No		Date	
-------------	--	-----------	--	-------------	--

	Date from	Date to
Request for non-allocated leave		

	Date from	Date to
Request for change of allocated leave (A,B,LS)		

Request for leave group exchange	Date from	Date to
I have agreed an exchange with		

Request for duty shift exchange (must be repaid within 28 days)	Date from	Date to
I have agreed to exchange with:		
Signature of person agreeing exchange		

Request for Time Owing	Current Balance of Time Owing	Date Time Owing to be taken	No. of Hours Required	New Balance of Time Owing
		D N		
Applicant signature			Date	

**Emergency Preparedness
Control Flexible Block Leave**

To be completed by Watch Manager (Control)

Standard Control Room Crewing Level (SCRCL) maintained	Yes				No
---	------------	--	--	--	-----------

Do Exceptional Circumstances Apply? <small>Delete as appropriate</small>	Yes	No			
Overtime has been sourced and agreed with:			Signature		
			Date		
Approval <small>Delete as appropriate</small>	Yes		No		
If Refused reason given:					
Applicant informed	Yes	No	Date		
Request approved by			Date		

Note to Line Managers: A copy of this request must be retained by both the applicant and their Line Manager.