



HUMBERSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Emergency Response

Operational Resilience and High Demand Policy

Owner	Executive Director of Service Delivery
Responsible Person	Head of Emergency Preparedness
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What we must do well



How we support our communities



We value and support the people we employ



We efficiently manage the Service

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1. INTRODUCTION

Humberside Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS) has strategies and plans in place to deliver its core public safety functions to the communities it serves. The scope of these functions is largely determined by the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. The public has an expectation that the Service will continue to deliver these functions in all but the most extreme circumstances. To do this, the Service must have robust Operational Resilience and Business Continuity arrangements in place. This is also a statutory duty placed upon the Fire Authority under the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004.

The provision of an effective emergency service is heavily reliant on having the correct number of resources available at designated locations throughout the Service area. Various scenarios could result in extreme demands being placed on the number of staff available for operational duty. These include pandemic flu, industrial action, large terrorist incidents and extreme or spate weather conditions. The Service must, therefore, put in place effective contingency plans to ensure the continuation of emergency response provisions in the event of such a scenario.

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 Policy.

National Guidance

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

2. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND 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 or 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. AIM & OBJECTIVES

Aim

This policy aims to improve the resilience of Humberside Fire Authority (HFA) against the impact of staff shortages and unforeseen events that may adversely affect its ability to deliver core risk-critical public safety and response functions.

Objectives

To provide a means by which HFRS can maintain its core risk-critical functions to

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provide operational resilience during times of staff shortages and unforeseen events.

It will provide a framework for managers and staff to assist throughout the various stages of resilience/business continuity-related incidents or occurrences and provide direction to promote recovery, including:

- Pre-planning before the event/incident occurs, including staff training requirements
- Exercising to test plans and planning assumptions
- Assessing priorities
- Resource allocation and legal considerations
- Post-event recovery

To ensure operational resilience, external partners may be requested to assist. The policy will refer where necessary, to these partner agencies and relevant documentation, particularly the Humber Local Resilience Forum (LRF) and the Emergency Procedures Manual (EPM). The EPM details overarching multi-agency arrangements and defines how responding organisations should work together, especially during a major incident or 'declared' emergency.

Triggers

- Where minimum staffing levels cannot be maintained over more than a short-defined period.
- Increased demand for HFRS resources due to prolonged or sustained periods of adverse weather, including widespread flooding, extremes of temperature and precipitation, causing spike or spate conditions.
- Loss of major IT functions or telecommunications.
- Industrial action impacting the Service.
- Loss of or disruption to HFRS buildings (including flooding and power outages).
- Pandemic health situations (influenza).
- Disruption resulting in the unavailability of a large number of appliances or risk-critical equipment such as breathing apparatus (BA).

4. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- [Equality Impact Assessment](#)
- Legal References
 - [The Civil Contingencies Act \(CCA\) 2004](#)
 - [The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004](#)
 - [Health and Safety at Work Act 1974](#)

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- Working Time Regulations 1998
- [Compliant with Business Continuity Standard ISO 22301:2012](#)
- National Guidance
 - Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018
- [Operational Resilience and High Demand Policy Delivery Guidance](#)
- [National Resilience Policy](#)
- Spike and Spate Conditions Control Operating Procedure
- LRF Emergency Procedures Manual
- [Operational Welfare Policy](#)
- [Flexible Duty System \(FDS\) Policy.](#)
- Welfare Equipment Manual.
- Service Business Continuity Plans
- Pandemic Plan
- Contingency Recall Process

5. DEFINITIONS

Business Continuity: the processes, procedures, decisions and activities to ensure that an organisation can continue to function through an operational interruption.

Contingency: a provision for a possible event or circumstance.

Policy: a formal statement of principles established by HFRS that provides the parameters for decision-making and actions.

Resilience: the ability of an organisation or individual to anticipate, prepare for, respond, and adapt to incremental change and sudden disruptions to maintain the delivery of core services and skills.

Spate: Spate conditions occur when emergency calls are received simultaneously for multiple, like, incidents at various locations. Spate conditions can last for hours or sometimes days. Events causing spate conditions (for example a significant weather occurrence) may be forecast and therefore planned for. Spate conditions may lead to Fire Control staff managing multiple incidents simultaneously. Significant weather occurrences could be a result of high winds, tidal surges, excessive rainfall, snow or extreme temperatures.

Spike: Spike conditions occur with little or no warning when multiple emergency calls about the same incident are received, such as a fire with plumes of smoke that can be seen over a wide area. These calls usually stop when operational staff arrive at the incident. Spike conditions are generally for a short period.

Statutory Duty: the legislative requirements that a public service, government department, company or member of a particular profession must obey.

6. POLICY STATEMENT

HFRS will be proactive in having appropriate plans and strategies in place to ensure the Service delivers its core operational functions. Scenarios involving staff shortages will include the use of day duty operational staff and some support staff, currently working a wide variety of duty systems, with the provision of bespoke, timely training. The training will form part of the Service generic staff shortage element of the Business Continuity Plans. To maintain other risk-critical core operational support functions it is incumbent on all Sections and Stations to maintain and regularly update their respective Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery Plans.

In all circumstances listed below, a partner alert will be sent to the Humber LRF detailing the situation HFRS is dealing with and what assistance is required.

7. SPIKE AND SPATE CONDITIONS

Fire Control Staffing

During spike or spate conditions it may be necessary to increase the staffing within Fire Control. The nature and timing of this increase will be determined by whether the Service has received prior notification of the potential for spike or spate conditions to occur, or whether the event was unforeseen. Further information regarding the specific procedures to be used in this scenario can be found in the Service 'Operational Resilience and High Demand Policy Delivery Guidance' and 'Spike and Spate Conditions Control Operating Procedure'.

The Fire Control Commander, in conjunction with the Tactical Commander, will need to consider utilising the following restricted mobilising options to help manage resourcing incidents:

- Designating human life risk only pumps
- Utilising FHUM-OPS02 Talkgroup
- Queueing incidents
- Batching incidents
- Reduced Pre-Determined Attendance (PDAs)
- Non-attendance to low-risk incidents
- Prioritisation of life-risk incidents
- Declining requests for additional resources
- Declining requests for assistance from neighbouring FRS'
- Opting out of Operation Willow Beck

Details of how this should be implemented can be found in the Spike and Spate Conditions Control Operating Procedure.

Recall to Duty and Operational Day Duty Staff

During spike or spate conditions, additional officers above the minimum may be required, therefore, there may be implementation of recall to duty or imposed prime for appropriately qualified off-duty officers with ICL 2 and ICL 3. For further information on this, please refer to the Flexible Duty System (FDS) Policy.

In these conditions, operational staff on day duties will be redistributed to roles suitable and relevant to their managerial competence including the possibility of redeployment to crew fire engines. Therefore, there is an expectation that all-day duty operational staff who fall within this category must maintain competency relevant to their operational command role level.

Staff in Non-Operational Roles

During spike or spate conditions, staff in non-operational roles may be reassigned from their day duty role to provide support to operational staff. The support staff will not be required to adopt any operational risk, but examples may include assisting with logistical arrangements, providing welfare to the staff at incidents across the Service area or assisting the Control suite with non-specialist activities (this list is not exhaustive). For further information on welfare please refer to the Operational Welfare Policy and the Welfare Equipment Manual.

Contingency Crews

The use of Contingency Crews and Contingency Control Crews will be considered to ensure a provision of response during periods of depleted staff through spate, pandemic, or industrial action.

Contingency crews will be subject to a specific programme of training maintenance commensurate with the role as agreed in the contract of employment.

Response Vehicles

During adverse or extreme weather conditions, standard FDS vehicles may not be suitable for a response. Therefore, the planning officer making the arrangements for such events may allocate more suitable vehicles such as 4x4s, as detailed in the Spike and Spate Conditions Control Operating Procedure.

8. LOSS OF MAJOR IT FUNCTIONS

The IT section has a Business Continuity (BC) Plan that should be activated by the Business Interruption Management Team (BIMT) in the event of a loss of major IT functions. The Humber LRF EPM refers to a loss of telecommunications and how other Services may be able to assist.

9. INDUSTRIAL ACTION

During periods of industrial action HFRS must continue to provide an emergency

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response service to its community, as stipulated by the Civil Contingencies Act (2004). As a result, BC plans for industrial action will be activated and Contingency Fire Crews and/or Contingency Fire Control Crews will be called upon.

10. LOSS OR DISRUPTION TO HFRS BUILDINGS

Major power outages or flooding in certain locations across the Service area could cause significant business interruption. Every fire station and site has a bespoke BC Plan which should be referred to. These detail backup sites and how staff should respond to these scenarios.

11. PANDEMIC RESPONSE AND SERVICE DISRUPTION

HFRS has a Pandemic Plan that is to be activated in the event of an influenza pandemic or similar public health outbreak. This plan provides information and guidance to managers in the event of staff shortages and other disruptions to service delivery because of an influenza pandemic or similar outbreak so that the Service can fulfil the duty to provide a service to the communities of the HFRS area. This will be coordinated by the Influenza Management Team (IMT) and BIMT.

The Full-Time Phased Appliance Degradation Table can be found in all BC plans for Fire Stations. These detail the order in which the crewing of appliances would be reduced based on global crewing figures, and cover removing the H02L1 at Clough Road as well as reducing crewing to 4 at stations that ride with 5 and finally, removing appliances if necessary. Again, in these scenarios, operational day duty staff can be called upon to crew appliances to bolster crewing.

**If you require any further guidance about this policy, please contact
Emergency Preparedness**