



**Northern Ireland
Fire & Rescue Service**



DRAFT INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN 2007 / 08

A Consultation Document

1 NOVEMBER 2006

You can obtain a copy of this Plan, on request, in alternative formats such as large print, Braille, disc and audio cassette and in minority languages to meet the needs of those who are not fluent in English. For further information you can contact us by:

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On behalf of the Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service (NIFRS) Board, I am delighted to present our draft Integrated Risk Management Action Plan 2007 / 08 for consultation.

Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP) is our approach to providing emergency cover in Northern Ireland. It is a structured process working towards improved community safety and strong partnerships with other agencies, to reduce injuries and deaths across a wide range of life threatening emergencies such as fires, road traffic collisions and other incidents that threaten community wellbeing.

IRMP is at the heart of all our activities in NIFRS and is fully integrated into the Board's Strategic Plans. IRMP is key to the modernisation agenda for fire and rescue services right across the UK and this draft Plan is a tailor made solution for Northern Ireland's changing needs for emergency cover.

Our IRMP process begins with this draft Action Plan on which we now wish to consult with you. Following the consultation period we will take into account your views and then where necessary, amend our Action Plan prior to final publication of the document for the period 2007 / 08.

This draft Action Plan for 2007 / 08, produced for consultation, is divided into 2 core sections:

Section 1 : Draft IRMP Action Plan 2007 / 08 - For Consultation

This section covers our proposed fourth year Action Plan upon which we wish to consult. A questionnaire is included to give you the opportunity to comment on this draft Plan.

Section 2 : Progress to Date

This section contains a summary of progress on rolling projects from our first, second and third year Action Plans.

The projects contained in this draft IRMP Action Plan 2007 / 08 will ensure NIFRS continues to provide an effective firefighting, rescue and fire safety service. This is your opportunity to help decide how NIFRS will continue to help make Northern Ireland safer.

If you would like to find out more about your Fire & Rescue Service please visit our website www.nifrs.org or telephone 02892664221.

**William F Gillespie OBE TD MBA JP DL
FCIOB FSCA
Chairman of the Northern Ireland Fire &
Rescue Service Board**



*William F Gillespie
Chairman*

NIFRS Board

The newly constituted NIFRS Board was established on 1 July 2006 with powers granted under the Fire & Rescue Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 and replaces the Fire Authority for Northern Ireland. The Board is responsible for steering the future management and operational direction of NIFRS.

The Board is also responsible for providing fire and rescue services across Northern Ireland and is funded by the Department of Health, Social Services & Public Safety.

The Board comprises a non-executive Chair, the Chief Fire Officer as Chief Executive and 10 non-executive Members, 4 of whom are District Councillors nominated by the Northern Ireland Local Government Association.

Ultimate responsibility for producing this IRMP rests with the NIFRS Board, with the support of the Chief Fire Officer and his staff.

Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service

NIFRS provides emergency cover for the whole of Northern Ireland - an area of over 5,500 square miles, with a population of 1.7 million.

About Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service

NIFRS has 67 fire stations:

- * 8 Wholetime
- * 6 Wholetime / Retained
- * 52 Retained
- * 1 Volunteer

Emergency cover is provided at Fire Station level by a current establishment of:

- * 901 Wholetime firefighters
- * 980 Retained firefighters
- * 12 Volunteer firefighters
- * 59 Control staff
- * 208 Support staff (plus 53 part-time Caretakers)
- * 112 front line pumps (not including reserves or training)





Management of Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service

NIFRS is managed by the Chief Fire Officer who is the Chief Executive, assisted by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, 2 Assistant Chief Fire Officers and 3 non-uniformed Directors, collectively known as the Principal Officers and Directors Group.

Area Commanders, each responsible for one of the 4 Area Commands in NIFRS, manage operational activity on a day to day basis.

Our 4 Area Commands are supported by 14 Districts, strategically placed across Northern Ireland. District Commands were introduced to create a community focus for NIFRS activities.



Fire Stations

NIFRS has a total of 67 fire stations, 8 of which are staffed by Wholetime (full-time) firefighters, 6 are staffed by a combination of Wholetime and Retained (part-time) firefighters and the remainder are staffed by Retained firefighters with one volunteer Fire Station on Rathlin Island.

The Wholetime firefighters, based at Fire Stations in the larger towns and cities throughout Northern Ireland, are immediately available to attend an emergency incident. Wholetime firefighters are organised into watches (shifts) and crew fire stations 24 hours per day.

The Retained firefighters based in their own towns go about their daily business in the normal way until they receive an emergency call. They then make their way to the fire station and respond to the incident.

Facts and Figures about Northern Ireland

- * 1,724,408 people¹
- * 236,265 over 65 years old¹
- * 25,173 over 85 year old¹
- * 660,900 dwellings²
- * 2.55 people per household on average²

¹ Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (Mid Year Estimates 2005)

² Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (Projected on 2002 figures)

Photograph from NIFRS Pump Drill Competition, Newry Fire Station on Saturday 30 September 2006.

SECTION 1: DRAFT IRMP ACTION PLAN 2007 / 08 - FOR CONSULTATION



Introduction

In this Section we summarise a number of specific proposals to change the way the fire and rescue service operates in Northern Ireland.

We believe these will help us deliver an even better fire and rescue service for everyone in Northern Ireland.

All of these proposals are significant in respect of the service we provide and warrant careful consideration prior to any final decisions being made.

Proposal 1

Carry out a Risk Assessment of ‘Other Buildings’ (buildings which were not covered by the dwellings risk assessment completed in 2005 / 06)

Background

NIFRS Emergency Response Standards were introduced on 1 April 2006 as a result of the ‘Dwelling Fire’ Risk Assessment (details of which can be found in our 3rd Year IRMP Action Plan www.nifrs.org).

The new Northern Ireland Emergency Response Standards, introduced on 1 April 2006, require NIFRS to respond as follows:

Risk Response Area	Appliance Attendance Times	
	1st Appliance	2nd Appliance
HIGH	6 mins	9 mins
MEDIUM	12 mins	15 mins
LOW	21 mins	24 mins

Table 1: Emergency Response Standards

The ‘Special Service’ Risk Assessment, underway this year (see page 26 for further information) and the proposed assessment of risk from ‘Other Buildings’ will further

contribute to the development of the NIFRS risk profile of Northern Ireland, ensuring the most appropriate response is provided to all types of emergencies.

‘Other Buildings’ are those buildings which are not classified as dwellings, for example hospitals, hotels, Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), nursing homes, schools, retail outlets, factories and offices.

The ‘Other Buildings’ Risk Assessment is the third in a 4 part risk assessment process using Fire Service Emergency Cover (FSEC) methodology, a process introduced across the UK to support the provision of local fire and rescue services.

Proposed Tasks

1. Carry out a complete risk assessment of “Other Buildings” in line with FSEC methodology and determine appropriate resources to deal with the identified risk by March 2008.
2. Produce a report with recommendations based on the risk assessment by April 2008.
3. Implement the findings of the report across NIFRS area by September 2008.

Task Manager: Deputy Chief Fire Officer

Proposal 2

Investigate the potential for the provision of 'Small Fires' Units

Background

Research has indicated that while our existing fleet of frontline water tender appliances are sufficient to meet our needs in relation to larger incidents, they may not be the most efficient way to deal with incidents of a smaller nature.

Smaller purpose built appliances (Small Fires Units) with a reduced level of capability may be more appropriate to respond in the first instance to smaller fires such as those involving rubbish, hedgerows or similar small items that have the potential to cause minimal damage.

This additional increased flexibility in service delivery will allow us to make optimum use of our existing operational resources by maintaining their availability in the event of larger incidents.

Proposed Tasks

1. Examine 5 year NIFRS incident data on all small fire incidents to establish what types of incident may benefit from this new response option by May 2007.

2. Identify locations which would benefit from such an initiative by June 2007.

Task Manager: Deputy Chief Fire Officer

3. Develop a concept vehicle specification taking into account the identified need by June 2007.

Task Manager: Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Technical Development

4. Develop a Small Fires Units Policy and carry out consultation process by November 2007.

5. Following consultation process review and implement Small Fires Unit Policy by January 2008.

Task Manager: Deputy Chief Fire Officer

Proposal 3

Review the locations of fire stations and resources in the Belfast Area

Background

The Belfast Area, due to the nature of the risks involved, has historically had a number of fire stations and appliances in close proximity to each other.

The Capital City has grown in size and demographics have changed over time. It is considered appropriate now to review the locations of the specific fire stations and the resources in the Belfast Area taking into account areas such as Dunmurry.

The stations and ‘front line’ appliances that may be affected are listed in the table opposite.

Proposed Tasks

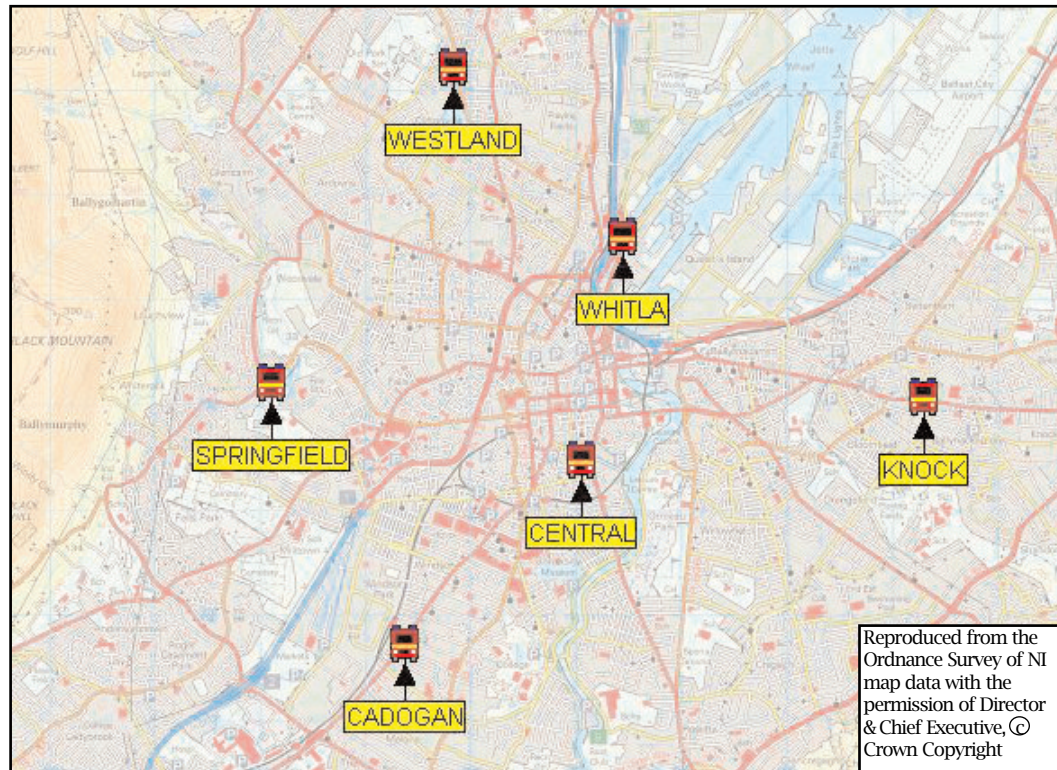
1. Review station locations in the Belfast Area taking into account stations on the periphery of Belfast (Glengormley, Bangor and Lisburn stations) and the requirement of NIFRS Emergency Response Standards by November 2007.
2. Consider the resource allocation within each station location in the Belfast Area as above and produce recommendations as to resource deployment by January 2008.

Task Manager: Deputy Chief Fire Officer

Belfast Area Fire Stations	Resources*
Knock, Upper Newtownards Road	2 Water Tender Ladders
Central, Bankmore Street	2 Water Tender Ladders
Cadogan, Lisburn Road	2 Water Tender Ladders
Whitla, Whitla Street	2 Water Tender Ladders
Westland, Cavehill Road	1 Water Tender Ladder
Springfield, Springfield Road	2 Water Tender Ladders

Table 2: Fire Stations & Resources in the Belfast Area

* NIFRS use this appliance as their standard front line fire engine. The appliance, also known as a Water Tender Ladder holds water to extinguish fires, hoses, reels, ladders and various items of rescue equipment.



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey of NI map data with the permission of Director & Chief Executive, © Crown Copyright

Fire Station Locations in the Belfast Area

Proposal 4

Review of second pumping appliances taking into consideration temporal and seasonal risk and demand

Background

A review of activity levels has indicated that the second fire appliance usage at some fire stations is low.

The stations and the corresponding number of mobilisations from 2001 to 2005 are listed in the table below.

Within the context of NIFRS Emergency Response Standards and Variable Crewing Proposal, it is proposed to examine the locations indicated to consider if it is appropriate to either remove the second appliance or replace it with a specialist type of vehicle.

Proposed Tasks

1. Review resource usage of second appliances and confirm or otherwise, the requirement for each by October 2007.
2. Consider alternative specialist appliances that may be more appropriate at those locations by November 2007.

Task Manager: Deputy Chief Fire Officer

	2001		2002		2003		2004		2005	
Station Location	1st Appliance	2nd Appliance	1st Appliance	2nd Appliance	1st Appliance	2nd Appliance	1st Appliance	2nd Appliance	1st Appliance	2nd Appliance
Ballycastle	303	109	255	114	338	116	210	74	220	48
Ballyclare	262	132	185	89	226	116	226	120	231	99
Ballymoney	260	173	226	137	196	148	208	124	230	75
Castleberg	148	65	160	58	135	70	63	38	49	37
Clogher	280	115	182	72	214	76	195	75	177	39
Hollywood	294	156	248	151	314	128	250	147	211	57
Kilkeel	317	131	303	89	442	186	335	119	334	94
Lisnaskea	325	156	289	118	349	161	325	122	279	55
Maghera	262	130	190	96	144	105	136	128	132	73
Newtownhamilton	152	52	118	46	163	87	177	67	163	60
Portstewart	298	99	258	80	273	99	230	107	147	43
Rathfriland	173	73	117	66	199	100	184	89	180	65

Table 3: Number of Mobilisations

Tell us what you think

The NIFRS Board would be pleased to hear from all interested parties who may wish to comment on Section 1 of this draft Action Plan. Please see below for details on how to contact us with your comments.

Email: irmp@nifrs.org

Write to: Integrated Risk Management Team
Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue
Service
Headquarters
1 Seymour Street
Lisburn
BT27 4SX

Call on: 028 9266 4221

Alternatively, you can complete and return the questionnaire to the above address.

Your comments should reach us no later than 31 January 2007.

What happens after consultation?

After 31 January 2007, we will review our proposals in light of all the comments received and take final decisions on our plans at a meeting of the NIFRS Board in February 2007. This meeting, like all our decision making meetings will be open to the public.

Our proposals will be subject to a screening process to identify any impact on equality of opportunity.

The final version of the Plan will then be published in April 2007 and issued to all those who responded during the consultation period.

It will also be available at:

- NIFRS Headquarters in Lisburn, our Fire & Rescue Training Centre in Belfast, at each Area and District Headquarters and at every fire station.
- Our website www.nifrs.org.
- Hard copies, large print and electronic versions may be requested by contacting our IRMP Team at the address provided.

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Confidentiality of Consultations

NIFRS will publish a summary of responses following completion of the consultation process. Your response, and all other responses to the consultation, may be disclosed on request. NIFRS can only refuse to disclose information in exceptional circumstances.

Before you submit your response, please read the paragraphs below on the confidentiality of consultations and they will give you guidance on the legal position about any information given by you in response to this consultation.

The Freedom of Information Act gives the public a right of access to any information held by a public authority, namely, NIFRS in this case. This right of access to information includes information provided in response to a consultation.

NIFRS cannot automatically consider as confidential information supplied to it in response to a consultation. However, it does have the responsibility to decide whether any information provided by you in response to this consultation, including information about your identity, should be made public or be treated as confidential.

This means that information provided by you in response to the consultation is unlikely to be treated as confidential, except in very particular circumstances.

The Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Freedom of Information Act provides that:

- NIFRS should only accept information from third parties in confidence if it necessary to obtain that information in connection with the exercise of any of NIFRS's functions and it would not otherwise be provided;
- NIFRS should not agree to hold information received from third parties 'in confidence' which is not confidential in nature; and
- acceptance by NIFRS of confidentiality provisions must be good reasons, capable of being justified to the Information Commissioner.

For further information about confidentiality of responses please contact the Information Commissioner's Office (Northern Ireland), Room 101, Regus House, 33 Clarendon Dock, Laganside, Belfast, BT1 3BG. Telephone 028 9051 1270 / Fax 028 9051 1584.

Alternatively, you can visit their website www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk/.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you for taking time to read this draft IRMP Action Plan 2007 / 08. This questionnaire is included to give you the opportunity to tell us your views on the proposals contained within Section 1.

When completed, please detach and return to:

Integrated Risk Management Team
Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service
Headquarters
1 Seymour Street
Lisburn
BT27 4SX

Alternatively, the questionnaire is available on our website: www.nifrs.org

Have we provided sufficient information for you to form an opinion on the proposals?

Yes

No

Proposal 1 Carry out a Risk Assessment of 'Other Buildings'

Proposal 2 Investigate the potential for the provision of 'Small Fires' Units

Proposal 3 Review the locations of fire stations and resources in the Belfast Area

Proposal 4 Review of second pumping appliances

If you require additional information on any of our proposals please contact NIFRS IRMP Team via telephone 028 9266 4221 or email irmp@nifrs.org





Are there any Proposals that you believe the NIFRS Board should not be considering?

Yes

No

Comments:

Lined area for providing comments to the first question.

With regard to the Section 75 Groups (see table on page 20), are there different needs, experiences, issues and priorities that you think should be considered in relation to the Proposals?

Yes

No

Comments:

Lined area for providing comments to the second question.

In addition to mainstreaming equality, NIFRS wishes to rural-proof the Proposals contained within Section 1 of this draft Plan. What do you know to be the different experiences, situations and roles of people living in rural areas which may impact on how they may be affected by these Proposals?

Comments:

Lined area for providing comments to the third question.

Main groups relevant to Section 75 Categories:

CATEGORY	MAIN GROUPS
Religious belief	Protestants, Catholics, people of non-Christian faiths, people of no religious belief.
Political opinion	Unionists generally, Nationalist generally, members/supporters of any political party.
Racial group	White people, Chinese, Irish Travellers, Indians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, Black Africans, Black Caribbean people, people with mixed ethnic group.
Men & Women generally	Men (including boys), women (including girls), trans-gendered people.
Marital status	Married people, unmarried people, divorced or separated people, widowed people.
Age	For most purposes, the main categories are, children, under 18, people aged between 18 – 65 and people over 65. However, the definition of age groups will need to be sensitive to the policy under construction.
Persons with a disability	Disability is defined as; a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities as defined in Sections 1 and 2 and Schedules 1 and 2 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
Persons with dependants	Persons with personal responsibility for the care of a child; persons with personal responsibility for the care of a person with an incapacitating disability; persons with personal responsibility for the care of a dependant elderly person.
Sexual orientation	Heterosexuals, bisexuals, gays, lesbians.

Additional Information:

I am a member of the public

I am an employee

I am representing a Community Organisation

I am representing a Stakeholder Organisation

I am representing a Business Organisation

Other (please specify) _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Thank you for completing this questionnaire, your comments are much appreciated and will be taken into consideration when finalising the IRMP Action Plan 2007 / 08. Results of this consultation exercise will be available on our website in April 2007.



SECTION 2: PROGRESS TO DATE



Photograph from NIFRS Pump Drill Competition, Newry Fire Station on Saturday 30 September 2006.

Introduction

The Fire Authority for Northern Ireland IRMP Action Plans for 2004 / 05, 2005 / 06 and 2006 / 07 identified a number of key projects to help us deliver a modern fire and rescue service.

Progress on our first and second year IRMP Action Plans was reported in the Fire Authority's Draft Integrated Risk Management Plan 2006 / 07 (to access a copy, please visit our website www.nifrs.org).

This Section provides a summary of progress on those projects which were not complete at that time. We have detailed our original objective, what we have achieved and measurable outcomes (where applicable). In addition, progress to date on our third year IRMP projects is also included here.

NIFRS continues to develop an integrated approach to working with other agencies with the aim of further driving down the risk of fires and other emergencies. This includes the sharing of data and the development of partnerships with bodies such as Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, Police Service of Northern Ireland, Northern Ireland Ambulance Service and Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

We are also committed to maintaining and developing new partnerships with other statutory agencies as well as with those in the voluntary and commercial sectors.

RESPONDING TO EMERGENCIES

Pre-determined Attendances

Objective:

We said we would review and implement our policy on the number and types of appliances that we send to incidents as 'pre-determined' attendances (PDAs).

What we have achieved:

A review of PDAs was completed by Eastern Area Command in March 2005, and this has since been rolled out to our 3 other Area Commands. A service-wide PDA review was completed in February 2006.

Outcomes:

- * *Eastern Area Command*
Number of PDAs reviewed: 1,331
Number retaining a PDA above 2 pumping appliances: 172
Represents 87% reduction
- * *Southern Area Command*
Number of PDAs reviewed: 258
Number retaining a PDA above 2 pumping appliances: 210
Represents 19% reduction

- * *Western Area Command*
Number of PDAs reviewed: 665
Number retaining a PDA above 2 pumping appliances: 280
Represents 58% reduction

- * *Northern Area Command*
Number of PDAs reviewed: 258
Number retaining a PDA above 2 pumping appliances: 176
Represent a 32% reduction

Outcome:

- * Total number of PDAs reduced by 67%.
- * Significant reduction in the number of appliance movements across Northern Ireland.
- * Increased availability of appliances to respond to incidents.
- * Increased time available for training and other activities.

Call Challenge Policy

Objective:

We said we would implement a revised Call Challenge Policy aimed at reducing mobilisations to hoax calls.

What we have achieved:

- * Call Challenge Policy has been completed and was subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.
- * NIFRS Regional Control Centre (RCC) staff continue to use their professional judgement and expertise in Call Challenge procedures to drive down hoax calls made to NIFRS.
- * New technology has been introduced giving RCC staff more information to assist the decision making process.

Outcomes:

Reduction in mobilisations to Hoax Calls:

	2002 / 03	2003 / 04	2004 / 05	2005 / 06
False Alarm Malicious Calls	5,726	6,017	5,823	4,960
Mobilised	2,025	1,998	1,712	1,394
% Not Mobilised	64.63%	66.8%	70.6%	71.9%

Call Management Policy

Objective:

We said we would produce a Call Management Policy and refine mobilisation procedures.

What we have achieved:

- * Call Management Policy has been completed and was subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.
- * The Policy provides a framework to manage an immediate and developing risk by evaluating the nature of the call and determining the appropriate intervention resources required to deal with it.

Outcomes:

- * NIFRS RCC staff use professional judgement to determine the most appropriate response to mobilise, taking into consideration the identified risk.

- * Reduced risk to responding NIFRS and other service resources by the timely provision of pertinent information.
- * Reduced risk to the public and the environment by the provision of appropriate and accurate advice or information.
- * The table below shows the number of times where RCC staff have assisted distressed callers using Emergency Call Handling techniques.

	2003 / 04	2004 / 05	2005 / 06
Emergency Call Handling Techniques Used	8	16	20

Dynamic Mobilising

Objectives:

We said we would:

- * Review mobilising software
- * Introduce a Mobile Data System Scheme
- * Introduce 'Dynamic' Mobilising

What we have achieved:

- * Review of mobilising software and Mobile Data Pilot complete.

Anticipated Outcomes:

- * The introduction of Dynamic Mobilising is dependant on:
 1. Availability of Global Positioning System (GPS) location details
 2. Integration of Geographical Information System (GIS) and ProCad systems
- * The introduction of Dynamic Mobilising will mean that resources are selected according to their geographic location and specific attributes. This will be enhanced by a move away from street based mobilising to premise based mobilising ensuring that the most appropriate operational assets are deployed as efficiently and effectively as possible.

The Next Steps:

- * GPS information will be available for all appliances when Terrestrial Trunked Radio (TETRA) roll-out is completed in April 2007.
- * Work ongoing to enable the transmission of the GPS data over the Barracuda TETRA network.

Wholetime / Retained Working

Objective:

We said we would introduce a system to allow Wholetime firefighters to undertake Retained working. This will enable Wholetime uniformed personnel to undertake Retained duties in their home town.

What we have achieved:

- * A policy has been agreed with key stakeholders.
- * This Policy is currently being Equality Screened (the Consultation period concludes 10 November 2006).

Anticipated Outcome:

- * Enhanced level of emergency cover across Northern Ireland.
- * Provision of additional resources to District Commanders to maintain effective service delivery in Retained fire stations across Northern Ireland.

The Next Steps:

- * It is intended to advertise for Wholetime / Retained firefighters for 4 pilot fire stations in late November 2006.

Flexible Duty System

Objective:

We said we would carry out a Review of the Flexible Duty System to maintain high levels of managerial duty whilst at the same time, increasing mid-week and weekend emergency cover and enhancing attendance and supervision of Retained training activities.

What we have achieved:

Review completed and implemented April 2006.

Outcomes:

- * Increased autonomy delegated to District level to ensure enhanced availability for emergency cover and Retained training attendance.
- * At least one Officer being on duty within each District (confidence level of 90% set and audited at each Area Command).

42 Hour Shift System**Objective:**

We said we would review the effectiveness of the existing 2-2-4 shift system in relation to new Emergency Response Standards.

What we have achieved:

- * Initial research of Wholetime fire station turn-out times and the provision of rest facilities on fire stations completed February 2006.
- * Following the introduction of new Emergency Response Standards in April 2006, additional empirical data relating to turn-out times from Wholetime station locations has been analysed.
- * Statistical data indicates improvements in Wholetime fire station turn-out times can be achieved.

The Next Steps:

- * Information identifying watches and stations for improvement to be supplied to each Area Commander October 2006.
- * Follow up report to examine if Wholetime station turn-out times have improved will be completed by April 2007.

Provision of Foam for Firefighting**Objective:**

We said we would review the provision of bulk foam supplies and equipment for operational use.

What we have achieved:

- * Audit of bulk Foam Stocks, Foam Equipment and Drivers completed in June 2006.
- * Mobilising protocols updated in May 2006.
- * Research and development continuing into future use of Compressed Air Foam Systems on appliances (CAF's).

The Next Steps:

- * CAFs to be introduced on 2 new specification appliances by March 2007.
- * New Foam Policy / Technical Memorandum to be completed by March 2007.

Carry out a Review of Emergency Cover across NIFRS area**Objective:**

We said we would carry out a Review of Emergency Cover taking into consideration the new Emergency Response Standards introduced 1 April 2006.

What we have achieved:

Review complete and 7 stations identified as requiring some form of Wholetime Cover:

- * Newtownards
- * Portadown
- * Coleraine
- * Carrickfergus
- * Antrim
- * Omagh
- * Armagh

Outcome:

Variable Crewing Proposal developed to provide 12 hour Wholetime cover in these stations.

The Next Steps:

Variable Crewing Proposal consultation exercise concludes 17 October 2006, following which, the NIFRS Board will consider the way forward.

Carry out a Special Service Incident Risk Assessment

Objective:

We said we would complete a risk assessment of Special Service Incidents and provide appropriate resources to deal with that risk.

What we have achieved:

- * Town and Settlement Boundary Data sourced from Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) and integrated into NIFRS Geographical Information System.
- * 3 years Historical Incident Data (2003 – 05) manually 'cleaned' to ensure robust data for analysis.
- * Methodology prepared in line with Fire Services Emergency Cover.

The Next Steps:

- * Risk Assessment on target for completion October 2006, following which, a Recommendation Report will be produced.
- * Following a period of public consultation, the recommendations contained within this report will be finalised and implemented.

Review of Unwanted Fire Signals Policy

Objective:

We said we would carry out a full review of the Unwanted Fire Signals (UFS) Policy to determine effectiveness.

What we have achieved:

- * Since its introduction in April 2005, the UFS Policy has been closely monitored at NIFRS Headquarters and Area Commands.
- * Interim progress reports on the effectiveness of the Policy are regularly submitted to NIFRS Senior Management Team.
- * Ongoing consultation with each Area Command and key stakeholders to assess the effectiveness of the Policy.
- * In the majority of cases, the mobilisation to an Automatic Fire Alarm has been reduced to one appliance. Operational procedures have been implemented to ensure an enhanced attendance if required.

Outcome:

- * Year 1 of the policy has shown a decrease in the mobilisations to Automatic Fire Alarms from 23,865 in 2004 / 05 to 9,052 in

2005 / 06. This represents a reduction of 62%.

The Next Steps:

- * The number of false alarms from Automatic Alarm Systems has risen steadily over the last number of years. From 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006, NIFRS attended 7,853 False Alarms due to Apparatus.
- * Operational crews, District and Area Officers will continue to work with premises and organisations in an effort to reverse this trend.
- * NIFRS will also seek to address this problem through the enforcement of relevant legislation.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)**Objectives:**

We said we would:

- * Produce 4 new SOPs
- * Review 4 existing SOPs

What we have achieved:

- * Draft SOP for 'Light Insulated Sandwich Panels' complete; currently undergoing consultation.
- * Review of SOP for 'Incident Command' commenced. Initial research and discussion underway, involving liaison with PSNI in line with the principles of Integrated Emergency Management.³
- * Initial research into SOP for 'Performance Review of Command' underway. A further 8 Officers trained and available from 1 July 2006.
- * A review of SOP for 'Incidents resulting from sustained Civil Disturbance' is currently being completed.

Outcome:

Review of SOP for 'Incidents on farms / agricultural land during normal operational periods and animal epidemics' completed and communicated throughout NIFRS during June 2006.

The Next Steps:

- * Initial research into SOP for 'Man Made Mineral Fibres' underway. First draft to be completed November 2006.
- * Research into SOP for 'Incidents involving Aircraft on and off Airfield' to commence November 2006.
- * Research into SOP for 'Agro-Chemicals' due to commence January 2007.

DEVELOPING A SAFER COMMUNITY**Introduce a Risk Based Home Fire Safety Programme****Objective:**

We said we would provide a risk based approach defining those areas most at risk from dwelling fires; target these areas and, where appropriate, provide assistance to prevent fires starting in the first place.

What we have achieved:

- * A risk based approach has been developed to target high risk areas for dwelling fires. This has been completed on the Geographical Information System which maps those areas most at risk from dwelling fires. This information has been issued to all District Commands for the implementation of Home Fire Safety Checks in each Area Command.
- * In addition to the use of NIFRS historical data, an interagency approach has been developed to include referral mechanisms from organisations such as local District Councils, Community Safety Partnerships, Home Accident Prevention and Investing for Health groups.

³Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister "Guidance to Emergency Planning arrangements Northern Ireland: Chapter 2" 2004

Outcome:

The Home Fire Safety Programme has been implemented across Northern Ireland with partners such as:

- * Royal National Institute for the Deaf and Sensory Support Agencies for fitting smoke alarms for the deaf;
- * In conjunction with Belfast City Council we have a mutual referral scheme for the completion of Home Safety Checks and the fitting of 10-year smoke alarms; and
- * B&Q Warehouse for the provision of smoke alarm fitting kits.

The Next Steps:

A full 3 year review will also take place as part of the IRMP review process in 2007 / 08.

SUPPORTING OUR PEOPLE

Examine the role of non-uniformed Community Development and Fire & Rescue Training Centre staff

Objective:

We said we would consider the current workload in Community Development and Training, and which jobs need to be filled to fulfil NIFRS obligations.

What we have achieved:

- * Review of Community Development staff currently ongoing following publication of new National Guidance.
- * Review of Fire & Rescue Training Centre staff underway.

Outcome:

4 new non-uniformed Fire & Rescue Training Centre posts established:

- * 3 Career Development; and
- * One Driver Training.

The Next Steps:

- * Completion of Review of Community Development is currently awaiting the outcome of legislative changes, NIFRS response to the legislation in terms of inspections etc, the additional workload brought about by Risk Assessments and the statutory requirement for the delivery of Community Education and Fire Investigation.
- * The completion of the review of uniformed posts within the training function is linked to the introduction of a new Firefighter Development Programme for Wholetime and Retained staff. This programme includes both core skills and risk-based training elements. The completion of the review of training staff will be finalised when the Station Risk Training Profiles and current retained NVQ Pilot have been completed in March 2007.

MANAGING OUR RESOURCES

Business Continuity Planning

Objective:

We said we would complete the Business Continuity Planning process within NIFRS

What we have achieved:

- * Each Department and Area of NIFRS have submitted individual Emergency Response Plans and these have been validated in line with the first stage of testing recommended in PAS 56.⁴
- * Recommendations made following validation have been incorporated into the review of the business continuity planning process and included in planned training.
- * Liaison with the Home Office Emergency Planning College to address the training needs of NIFRS.
- * Two levels of training identified: (1) Strategic; and (2) Practitioner. Incorporated into NIFRS training strategy.

Outcomes:

- * Strategic awareness training for Senior Managers organised for October 2006 in conjunction with Emergency Planning College.
- * A further training course for practitioners (BCP team leaders) is to be conducted in late 2006.
- * Following the completion of Business Continuity Planning training in January 2007, selected Emergency Response Plans for Departments and Areas of NIFRS will be tested.

The Next Steps:

- * The Business Continuity Plan for NIFRS is due for completion April 2007.
- * The Business Continuity Plan is a dynamic document which will be amended following any change to our Organisational structure or resources.

Co-responder

Objective:

We said we would, in liaison with the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS), implement a Co-responder scheme at 6 fire station locations

What we have achieved:

- * Partnership developed between NIFRS and NIAS.
- * We have delivered First Aid at Work training with additional training in the use of Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) given to personnel in Portaferry and Ballywalter fire stations, where AEDs are now available.
- * This training provides our staff with the essential skills to provide an early intervention and stabilisation of casualties.
- * In May 2006 a Life-Saving Defibrillator Partnership between NIFRS and Local Communities was established. Defibrillators provided by the Cormac McAnallen Trust have been placed in 4 fire stations in Co. Tyrone: Dromore, Cookstown, Fintona and Pomeroy.

⁴The Business Continuity Institute PAS 56 "Guide to Business Continuity Management" 2003

SECTION 2 : PROGRESS TO DATE

- * NIFRS Specialist Rescue Team based at Central Fire Station in Belfast have completed Specialist Trauma Training to enable them to stabilise casualties within collapsed structures or similar locations where access is difficult.
- * NIFRS are now in a position to assist the NIAS and await a decision regarding protocols for mobilisation as part of the Co-responder initiative.